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TRUST ME.

BY J. R.

Oh, trust me! As one pleads for life
I come to-night your face before,
Dear, whose fond words, though lowly breathed,
May bid my sad heart fear no more.
With trembling lips and searching gaze,
A suppliant for your love I bend:
Oh, darling, lay your hands in mine,
And trust me—trust me to the end.

Oh, trust me! Though like storm-tossed bird
Swept far from leafy-sheltered nest
You roam, my yearning arms would reach
And fold you safely on my breast.
I ask no more than your sweet self—
Toward you all hopes, all longings tend—
Oh, darling, lay your hands in mine,
And trust me—trust me to the end.

Oh, trust me! By a man's strong will
I claim you mine o'er time, o'er death.
Content for you to toil, to bear
All things e'en till my latest breath.
Love's willing slave, yet master brave,
But yours whatever Fate may send—
Oh, darling, lay your hands in mine,
And trust me—trust me to the end.

Thorns and Blossoms

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BLACK VEIL," "HER MOTHER'S CRIME," "A BROKEN WEDDING-RING," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

THERE was no moon on that night Lord Ryvers had looked forward to with such anxiety; but the light scarcely dies out of the sky on a fair July night.

From the bonnie woods of St. Byno's a faint, sweet sound, like the echo of an Æolian harp, reached Violet's ears; from the river came a soft musical murmur.

It was not till after a hard struggle with her conscience that Violet went to keep her appointment.

She consoled herself however with a false line of argument.

Miss Atherton had forbidden her to leave the garden, and she was not going to leave it.

She would be within the rose-covered hedges; and she would not have gone at all but that she really felt so sorry for the young artist.

He had looked so handsome, so imploring the promise to see him again had almost unconsciously been wrung from her.

It was all her aunt's fault.

If she had allowed them to say good-bye openly and quietly, there would have been no need for this twilight interview.

After all she did not quite like it. Her sense of propriety was opposed to it; but she could not let him go without one word; he had been so pleasant and kind to her. The girl's heart rebelled against her aunt. Why had she not asked the young artist in, and allowed them to spend an hour or two together?

Then he would have said good-bye, and would have gone out of their lives probably for ever.

Now she was going to do that which she would rather not have done.

"Go to your room at once," Miss Atherton had said, when the usual family devotions were over. "You will not want a candle. It is quite light enough. Good night."

And then Miss Atherton had retired to rest, happily unconscious of her niece's meditated plans.

Meanwhile a handsome, ardent young lover moved softly through the deep shadows of St. Byno's wood, looking with anxious eyes that pierced them at the picturesque cottage.

He went slowly down the riverside, crossed the corner of the wood, passed the little gate where the white acacias grew, down by the rose-covered hedge, and then he stood still.

Never had his heart beaten so before.

There was no stir in the cottage; the white blinds were down.

Would she come?

The Ryvernes were not famous for patience; but the young lord had never been in such a fever of suspense before. Would she come?

Ah, there was a stir, something surely was moving over the long grass that shook the white clover, and sent the acacia-leaves fluttering to the ground!

But it was only the summer night breeze.

Would she never come?

A little bird in the far distance twittered. He heard the deep baying of a hound across the river.

"Oh, my love, my darling," he cried, "if you would but come!"

And just then the pale beautiful face of the young girl looked anxiously down through the shadows.

She could not see him, and she did not know if he was there.

Just as he had pictured her, she came out in her long blue dress; over her head she had thrown a black lace veil.

It was darker than she thought it would be.

She stopped for one moment under the chestnut-trees to reconnoitre before she passed on to the place of rendezvous. In another minute they were standing face to face, the handsome young lover and the fair-haired bautiful girl.

"How good of you to come!" he said. "I hardly dared to hope you would do so."

"I ought not to have come," she said. "Do not praise me for doing what I know to be wrong: but you have been so kind to me, and I have enjoyed our intimacy so much, I did not like to think I should not see you again."

He was looking at the hedge.

"I am standing," he said, "outside the gates of Paradise. Will you open them for me?"

"I cannot," she answered.

"You can, if you will. Tell me that I may leap over this hedge."

"I ought not to do so," she said.

"I cannot see you here, and I want to see your face again," he urged.

She was silent for a few moments. Then she thought to herself that, as he was there, he might just as well be on one side of the hedge as the other.

"You may come," she said softly. "But mind you do not fall."

"I could clear a hedge twice as formidable as that," he replied, with a laugh; and the next moment he was standing by her side.

"How strong and agile you are!" she said to him, with a smile, looking admiringly at him, as women do look at brave, manly men.

"Show me anything that I would not do to have the happiness of standing by your side for one minute. You said something to me about good-bye. Do you think I could leave you?"

His voice trembled with passion.

"I have never thought about it," she said. "I suppose you will go when your picture is finished?"

"I am quite sure I shall not. I do not care whether the picture is ever finished or not. I care for nothing—do you not see?—I care for nothing in the wild world but you."

"But me," she repeated wonderingly—"but me?"

"Yes, you. You can send me away from you if you will; but think, for the mercy of Heaven, think before you do it. I love you, and I cannot leave you. I love you, and I would rather lie dead here at your feet than leave you. Do you understand, my beautiful, fair-haired darling? Is it madness to say I love you? Then I am of all men the most mad."

"You love me?" she repeated gravely. "Why, you have only seen me three or four times!"

"It needed only for me to see you once to know that I had met my fate," he cried. "Love comes to us in varied guise. I saw you, and my heart went out to you at once. Something that had never lived in my soul before awoke into vigorous life. If I had known you fifty years I could not love you better. You are the fairest and most beautiful woman that ever gladdened a man's eyes, that ever wiled a man's heart from his breast; and I love you. If I had a thousand tongues they would all cry out, 'I love you, I love you!'"

"Hush!" she said, holding up one little hand. "You—you frighten me!"

"I frighten you!" exclaimed Lord Ryvers. "Ah, how unfit I am even to talk to one so beautiful, so gentle as you! Forgive me, and I will be gentle as yourself. I only want to impress on you the fact that I love you, that while I live I can never again be happy away from you, that I would give my life and all it holds for you. Oh, sweet, if you could know how beautiful you look standing there, you would not wonder that I love you so! You have never had an admirer, have you?"

"An admirer?" she repeated, half trembling, half delighted. "I hardly know what you mean."

"Look at me," he cried—"I am your admirer—your lover. It means a man mad for the time, who sees, hears, knows, thinks of nothing but the one beloved."

"That must be tiresome," she answered naively. "I should not like to have all my thoughts and ideas concentrated on one person."

"You would, if you loved him; that makes all the difference, you see."

"Love and admiration have been a sealed book to me," she said. "Indeed, I have never thought of them."

"Yet love is the very life of a woman," he cried incredulously.

"It has not been mine," she said. "Hark! What is that?"—for there was a sudden commotion in one of the tall lime-trees near them.

"Probably a little bird has fallen from its nest," Lord Ryvers answered, smiling, for she was alarmed, and clung to him.

He caught the little white hands in his own, and held them fast.

"I thought it was my aunt," she said half laughing, half trembling.

"Never mind if it were. I would go to her, if you would let me, and would tell her that her niece was the loveliest creature I had ever seen, that I loved her with my whole heart and longed to make her my wife."

"I should be locked up in the darkest cellar the house boasts, and never allowed to come out again," Violet declared a little hysterically.

"I wonder," he said gently, still holding the two little white hands in his own—"I wonder if you would be very angry if I called you Violet?"

"It would not be of much use to be angry about anything now," she said.

"Then I may. Oh, beautiful Violet, listen to me! I love you with all my heart; will you try to love me a little in return?"

She was silent.

It was all so novel to her.

Then she looked up at him with frank childlike eyes.

"You have taken me by surprise," she said.

"Have you not thought of me at all?" he asked.

"Yes; but only as a nice pleasant friend, different from every one else here in being of my own age."

He was silent for a few minutes; then he said, with a thrill of passion in his clear voice—

"You must do more than that now, Violet. I must be more than the pleasant friend whom you like because he is of your own age. Think of me, sweet as the lover who loves you with such passionate devotion that he would die for you, the lover who has no joy, no happiness, but with you."

"It sounds quite poetical," she said.

"It is true!" he cried vehemently. "Oh, Violet, how hard it is to make you understand! My darling, I knew when you spoke to me in the woods that day that you were as simple as a child. You reminded me of a beautiful wild bird so bright and free; and now I want to catch the wild bird and keep it as my own forever."

"I suppose that really, if the truth were told, I did wrong in answering your questions," she said half ruefully.

"You could not do anything wrong, I am sure," he declared. "Tell me," he continued, after a pause, "if I had gone away without seeing you again, without saying good-bye, would you have cared, would you have been unhappy, would you have remembered me?"

She thought over his words before she answered them.

"I should have been very sorry, but not unhappy," she replied. "I should not have forgotten you; and I am glad, honestly glad, to see you again."

His face brightened as he gazed on her fair shy, lovelinoss.

"Thank you for so much," he said. "I will teach you the rest; that is the beginning; the rest will come. You are glad to see me. Heaven bless you!"

He bent down and kissed the fair hands that lay so chill and quiet in his own.

And that first caress ever given to her stirred the maiden depths of her heart and soul as a pebble thrown into a deep lake disturbs its surface.

If aunt Alice could but have seen that!

Violet shuddered as the thought passed through her mind, and he thought that she was vexed at his caress.

"Oh, Violet, if you would, if you could but learn to love me a little!" he said. "Love wins love. Will you try?"

"I might try," she whispered; "but I am not at all sure that I should succeed."

"I shall be quite content at present if you will try. You have no other admirer, and you love no one else. I see no reason, my darling, why I should not win you in time. I will live for you; I will love you so well, so dearly, that you shall not be able to help loving me. I am happier than I dared to hope; I am happier than I deserve to be. You might have sent me away; you have listened, and you will love me in time. I have been talking to you all this time, and, Violet, I have not seen your eyes. Raise them to mine, sweetheart, that I may see what they say."

Slowly enough the white lids moved, the long fringed lashes were raised, and the dark violet eyes looked sadly into his.

"What beautiful eyes!" he cried. "And they tell me that you do love me a little. Is it true?"

His own were so full of passionate adoration that hers fell before them.

"I am frightened," she said with a shudder. "My heart beats. Oh, let me run away; I must not stay here! What have you done to me? It is as though my heart and soul were stirred with mingled pleasure and pain."

She tried to draw away the little white hands; but he would not release them.

"My beautiful sweetheart, listen to me."

"I am not your sweetheart. You must not use that word to me."

"That is just the question," he said. "Will you be my sweetheart? I will not ask more just yet; consent to that and I shall be the happiest man in the wide world. My sweetheart, my beautiful, gentle, graceful sweetheart, will you? If you do not like me, you can bid me depart; but if you learn to love me, you will make this earth paradise to me."

She was startled; but her heart did not beat with rapture, nor were her lips mute with the glad surprise that comes to most young girls when their lover speaks.

"Think for a few minutes, and then answer me," Lord Ryvers went on; "and remember, it is not a man's fancy, but a man's life that hangs on the word. I do not wish to influence you unduly; but, if you say me nay, I shall fling myself away as one flings away a worthless weed. Oh, Violet, is your heart cold to me; are your eyes blind, your lips dumb? I stand here before you, my heart in my words, my life in your hands. Now tell me: will you be my sweetheart?"

He threw his arm round her with a caressing gesture, as though he would protect her from everything hurtful; and it was this gesture of his, this half-caress, that touched her heart.

"Say 'yes,' Violet. You shall never repent it," her lover pleaded passionately. "You do not know what life is; I will teach you. Open your pure young heart to the influence of love. Whisper that one word to me, Violet."

He bent his handsome head to catch the faint sound.

She thought for a few minutes, and then she answered—

"Yes."

CHAPTER VII.

"YOU have sold a picture, Randolph, I am sure," was the greeting Lord Ryvers received one morning, when he saw Violet coming from the Hill Farm.

He went often to the Hill Farm now, for Miss Atherton had caught a violent cold, which had caused her to relax her vigilance and send her beautiful niece out in her stead—not for long rambles for pleasure, that was plainly understood; but it was necessary for her to go to Warwick once or twice in the week, and also to the Hill Farm on little matters of business; and though it struck Miss Atherson more than once that her niece was a long time absent, she never dreamed of the cause.

Lord Ryvers had made himself quite at home at the Hill Farm; the farmer and his buxom wife knew him as a young artist who admired the queer sylvan scenery of the neighborhood.

Miss Beaton's name never passed his lips; but as by a tacit understanding, the good-natured mistress of the farm always mentioned in his presence—quite accidentally, to all appearance—when Miss Beaton was coming—never addressing herself pointedly to him, but always to some bystander.

It happened that Violet saw him every day.

He was very gentle with her.

He seemed to be content with the victory he had gained that evening when she had whispered her consent to be his sweetheart.

He would walk by her side and hold her hand in a long lingering clasp, but he never startled her more with passionate words or caresses.

He was too wise and too intent on winning her.

On this particular morning it was about half way between the farm and Acacia Cottage that they had met, when she greeted him with the words—

"You have sold a picture, Randolph, I am sure."

"What makes you say so?" he asked slowly.

"You know. Oh, Randolph, how you love mystery, and how I hate it! You know what I found in my canary's cage this morning—only this morning;" and the beautiful eyes were turned on him with mingled pleasure and wonder. "What a place to put a packet in!" she continued. "Suppose my aunt had gone to the cage the first thing this morning to feed the bird?"

"I knew she would not. From the chestnut-tree in the field I can see all that passes in your garden. Every morning I see you going to feed your bird after you have hung its cage up in the porch."

"I believe that you know everything I do and say," she replied, laughing and blushing. "Oh, Randolph, how beautiful it is!"

That morning on going to feed her canary, Violet found a little parcel in the cage.

It was addressed to "My beautiful sweetheart," and she knew at once that Randolph had climbed the garden wall, and had placed it there for her.

Opening it, she found a diamond ring, and though she knew little of jewels, she felt that it must have cost a large sum.

She had at once jumped to the conclusion that, to buy this for her, her artist-lover must have sold a picture, perhaps at a great sacrifice.

How dearly he loved her!

And her heart reproached her that she did not love him more.

He looked delighted when she praised his present.

"I am so glad you are pleased with it!" he said. "Have you put it on?

"Randolph, a diamond ring! What would my aunt say? No; I have locked it up in my drawer."

"Will you let me put it on for you?" he asked.

"Some day, perhaps," she replied; "but not yet—not yet, Randolph."

"I am very patient, Violet; I would wait all my life for you rather than lose you. Sweetheart, it was the second of June when I first saw you, and the harvest-moon will soon be shining."

"You said you would be content if I would be your sweetheart," she said, half reproachfully, half in surprise, "and I have been your sweetheart all these weeks, Randolph. What more do you want?"

"What more?"—and he looked at her in surprise. "Everything, Violet. But tell me why you think I have sold a picture."

"Because that ring must have cost so much money."

"I see!" he cried. "Do not be distressed about the money, Violet. I assure you that I have not sold one of my pictures, and that I had the money by me; I had, my dear, indeed."

"Now I shall enjoy my present," she said, her eyes brightening. "All my life I have longed for a beautiful ring. It shines Randolph, as though a myriad of sunbeams were concentrated in it."

"You are not mercenary," he said.

"I? Oh, Randolph, what a terrible idea! I mercenary——"

"I was thinking," he interrupted, "that you would not enjoy anything that you thought had cost any one else a sacrifice. If you thought I had sold a picture to buy that ring, you would not care for that."

"I should not care for it so much," she replied. "I have heard my aunt speak of diamonds; I know how valuable they are. I never thought I should have a diamond ring."

"One of these nights, when the moon is shining, you will let me come and put it on for you, will you not? We have been sweethearts now for many weeks. Are you so content, Violet, that you wish for no more?"

"It is very nice," she replied caressingly. "It is quite new for me to have some one who admires me, and says pretty things to me, who gives me beautiful presents and makes life more bright and cheerful for me. I am not sure that I want more."

"Now, Violet, stand still—how quickly you are walking, my darling, this morning!—stand still one moment, look into the very depths of your heart, and tell me would you like always to live in this fashion to be no nearer and no dearer to me than you are now?"

She stood still, and looked at him thoughtfully.

"What does your heart say, Violet?" he asked.

"It says nothing," she replied. "I am very happy."

"Have you no longing to be with me always?" he asked.

"I should like to see more of you," she replied, "certainly."

"When I am away from you, do you count the hours and minutes until I return?"

"No; but I am pleased when you come back."

"Oh, beautiful statue, when will you wake into life?" he cried. "When will your heart and soul be stirred within you? You have none of the love that burns my heart away. How shall I teach you? When will one spark of the 'divine fire' come to you? What can I do to make you love me?"

"I do love you," she said; but there was no girlish flush on her face, no love-light in her eyes.

"I must be content," he said. "You are my sweetheart, and you love me after your own fashion. You will love me better some day. Can you guess, Violet, why I have wanted so much to see you this morning?"

"No," she replied; "I could never guess."

"Dear one," he said earnestly, "it is a great happiness to have you for my sweetheart, greater than I can tell; but I want you to be something nearer and dearer. I want you to be my wife."

"You are never satisfied, Randolph," she answered. "If I were to be your wife, you would still want something more."

"Hardly; there can be nothing nearer, nothing dearer than a wife," he replied, with a half-smile. "I should be more than content if you would promise that."

"It is so much to promise, Randolph," she said—"so much!"

"If you are going to refuse me this, it would have been better never to be kind to me at all—a thousand times better!" he declared passionately. "I could not lose you now. A month since I might have borne it, and have lived. Think of it Violet. If you will marry me you shall have your heart's desire. I will take you to see the fairest lands on which the sun shines; you shall see the earth's noblest cities, Italy's art treasures, Switzerland's snow-capped mountains, all the beauties and marvels of creation; you shall have every wish gratified."

"You talk like a prince, Randolph," she answered calmly. "How could you do all this? It would take a fortune."

"I would spend a hundred fortunes on you," he answered eagerly.

"But you must have them first," she rejoined laughingly; "and you have not."

"I will make them," he said. "Violet, you told me once that you would not marry an aristocrat."

"And I mean it," she cried.

"If one stood here before you now, with the most ancient and honorable of titles, with a fortune that would make you a queen of fashion, would you not marry him?"

"No," she replied, with sovereign contempt; "I would never be false to the opinions of my life. I will marry a man who makes his own name by his own industry and talent. I shall never make you understand how I dislike the aristocracy. You would have no chance at all if you were an aristocrat, Randolph," she added, laughing; "but it is greatly in your favor that you are an artist. Of all professions I like that of an artist best."

"How glad I am!" he said.

"Ever since I first met an artist sketching in St. Byno's woods, I have liked men of his profession. They seem to me gentlemen, all of them. I am glad you are an artist, Randolph," she added musingly. "I cannot imagine a bad-tempered artist."

"That is not the question, Violet. The manners of artists might interest me at any other time, but not just now. You forget the question I have asked you—will you be my wife? Think how much I love you how happy you might make me; think of the pleasant life than I would plan for you, and think, though your Warwickshire home is beautiful, how monotonous the life is. Listen to me, sweet Violet. Just now all is bright and glad. You are young and beautiful, you are so full of vitality that the veriest trifle is a pleasure to you, and you find all existence bright and fair. But, my darling, the years will roll on and Time, most ruthless of enemies, will come and steal your youth, your brightness, the roses from your face, and the light from your eyes. Oh, my darling, can you think of spending all your fresh bright life in that solitary house, of having, no one to love but that stern, querulous aunt of yours? Oh, my darling, have pity upon yourself!"

For the first time he saw tears in her eyes.

"You have to choose between sunlight and darkness," he urged.

"Give me time to think," she pleaded.

"I will give you time. Take two days. This is Tuesday morning; on Thursday let me see, even if I cannot speak to you. Let me see you standing by the great chestnut-tree; and, if you will marry me, wear a bunch of scarlet geraniums in your blue dress. If I see it there, I shall thank Heaven indeed!"

* * * * * * *

Two whole days to pass in terrible suspense!

Lord Ryvers forgot all about his difficulties; he forgot his stately mother's proud aspirations, the hopes she had built up as his future; he could think only of one thing whether, when those two days had passed, he should see the scarlet bloom of the geraniums worn by the woman he loved.

If he saw her standing beneath the chestnut-tree with no scarlet flower on her bosom, he should give up title and estates, should never care for aught again in this world.

Thinking of all this, he fretted at the delay.

"Why did I say I would wait two days for her answer?" he asked himself. "She could have decided in one. Perhaps the more time she has to think, the less chance will there be for me."

He could do one thing that would help to pass a few hours away

He went over the next day to Warwick, and there purchased a bouquet of the finest scarlet geraniums.

Quite early the following morning, before any one in the cottage was astir, he stole through the garden and placed them where Violet must see them when she went to feed her bird.

He stood for some minutes trying to fancy what would happen—whether she would fling them away with scorn, or whether she would take a vivid scarlet spray and fasten it in the bodice of her dress.

He had made his home at "The Barley Mow," a pretty wayside inn that might have been the original of the world-famous "May-pole."

This morning the landlady of "The Barley Mow," as she carried away his untouched breakfast, said to him—

"You are not well, sir, you walk too much, or you work too hard; give yourself a day's rest."

He laughed to himself. What rest should there be for him until he should have learned his fate?

The breakfast being carried away, he went out.

Better would it be to spend the minutes of consuming torture out in the open air, where no one could comment on his appearance or wonder at his words.

And, as he walked along, he repeated over and over again a song that recurred to his mind—

"I fain would speak, yet dare not, for
Her gentle soul's distress,
What is to me one sorrow more,
So that she has one less?

"Yet I could wish, when I am dead,
Her eyes should look through mine;
And on my heart engraven read
This motto, 'Dir Allein!'"

How the words seemed to echo through his brain over and over again!

Then a bird flew from the great oak-tree, and he thought of Swinburne's beautiful line—

"A bird to the right sang follow."

The bird did fly to the right; it went over the river, and into the orchard that belonged to Acacia Cottage.

He would follow; he had told her that he should be there by ten, and it was yet only nine.

Would she have found the geraniums? And if she had, would she wear them?

He could see all over the garden and orchard from the green lane that ran parallel with them, and there he stood awaiting his doom.

He remembered once to have read that when a man stood up to hear his sentence of death passed, it was not the terrible words that impressed him so much as every little detail of the scene in court; so he found it with himself now.

The one great issue seemed to pass by him, as though he hardly knew why he was there, and the smaller details seemed to press upon him.

The linden-trees, under which he had asked her to stand for a brief moment, grew at the end of the garden, a plum-tree stood near.

He saw the bird seeking and enjoying the ripest plums, then flying in search of other sweets; he saw a kitten, soft and white as a snowball, creep along the wall, climb the tree, and lie in wait for a small bird, and then he saw the flutter of a blue dress amongst the trees. His suspense would soon be ended now.

Down the garden paths, over the grass, across to the white rails, came Violet; and then she stood for one minute under the branches of the linden-tree.

Lord Ryvers's flushed with happy pride, his face flushed with passionate delight, his heart beat fast, his pulse thrilled.

She had looked over the hedge into the lane, and he saw the gleam of golden hair, the beauty of her pure young face, and—ah, Heaven be thanked!—the scarlet geraniums on her breast.

CHAPTER VIII.

THAT same afternoon Lord Ryvers went boldly to Acacia Cottage.

After all, to face a tall angular lady with a great dislike to his sex was not perhaps the most alarming ordeal in the world.

He knocked at the door, which, in answer to his summons, was opened by the little maid.

She looked considerably alarmed at the sight of the tall handsome stranger, so imposing a visitor never having, within her experience, called upon her mistress.

"I want to see Miss Atherton," said the young lord; "is she at home?"

The little maid dropped a curtsey, but made no reply; her astonishment and fright seemed to have stricken her dumb.

"Do you think I could see Miss Atherton?" repeated Lord Ryvers, a trifle impatiently, seeing that the girl made no attempt to speak.

Still without a word she ushered the visitor into the little parlor.

Lord Ryvers had not to wait before Miss Atherton made her appearance.

She hastily closed the door behind her then, turning, confronted her unwelcome guest.

She looked ready to encounter a legion of lovers; there was no sign of quailing in her eyes or face.

"You wished to see me," she began very sternly.

"Yes," he replied. "I should be glad to have a few minutes' conversation with you."

"You are the young man with whom I met my niece once?" she said severely.

"I am that most fortunate of men," he replied

Miss Atherton turned half contemptuously away.

"What do you want with me?" she questioned curtly.

"I love your niece, and I have come to ask your permission to marry her," he said, plunging without any preamble into the subject nearest his heart.

"That you will never obtain," said Miss Atherton coldly.

"Then madam, with all due deference to you, I shall marry her without," he then replied.

"We shall see," said the lady, still calmly. "For my own part, I would rather see my niece locked up in a lunatic asylum than married."

Lord Ryvers bowed, for he was at a loss for words.

"Young man," said Miss Atherton solemnly, "do not stand there bowing at me. Does my niece know of this nonsense?"

"Miss Beaton did not know of my intention to call this afternoon. The fact of the matter is that I really could not wait any longer."

She glanced at him angrily.

"You will have to exercise your patience to a much greater extent," she said. "I shall countenance nothing of the kind."

Then with a stern mien, she rang the bell.

Did no remembrance come to her of the old sweet time when her heart had beaten, and her eyes had grown dim with tears?

"Tell Miss Beaton I want her," she said to the wondering maid; and, after a brief interval, Violet appeared.

She looked so shy, so coy, so lovely, as she entered, blushing and startled, that the young lord lost his head altogether, and was on the point of committing himself in unpardonable fashion, when a look from Miss Atherton restrained him.

"Violet," said her aunt grimly, "this young man has come to ask me if he may marry you. I say 'No.' You hear me, Violet? I object to it."

Beautiful, blushing Violet looked at her lover as though she would say, "You must take up the challenge, Randolph."

Stepping forward he took his stand by Violet's side; then he clasped one of her little white hands in his, Miss Atherton looking on with cold displeasure.

"We hope," he said, "that you will give your permission. We shall be married in any case; but Violet would be much happier

if you consented, for she cannot forget all your kindness to her."

"It needs no stranger to tell me that," said Miss Atherton. "Violet do you—do you love this young man? Do you wish to marry him?"—with an air of lofty disdain.

"I should not mind, aunt," answered Violet faintly.

Then Miss Atherton's heart thrilled with a passing reminiscence of the old passion. If the man she had loved so faithfully had asked her to marry him, she would not have answered in calm tones like Violet. She hated the very thought of love and matrimony; but she turned from her niece with a gesture of contempt to Lord Ryvers.

"Am I to understand that my niece professes to love you?"

"I am more than content," he replied. "If Miss Beaton will marry me, I will make her the happiest wife in the world, and I will devote my whole life to her."

"Men all say the same thing!" groaned Miss Atherton.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Professor's Pupil.

BY RANDALL W. BAYLE.

EOLINE was the niece of John Graham of Ashby, and had known no home but her uncle's from the time she was a baby.

Her father had married pretty Nettie Graham, and had died only six months later.

When baby Eoline opened her soft brown eyes upon the world, Nettie closed her blue ones, and was cradled to sleep in the graveyard.

Uncle John, who had loved the blue-eyed sister, took Eoline into the nursery with eight of his own children, and Aunt Mary never let the little orphan child know any difference in mother-love or care from that given her own little ones.

So Eoline grew to womanhood, knowing nothing of her father, save the name recorded upon the tombstone—Stephen Courtenay—and that her own name was not that of her cousins.

But John Graham was far from a rich man, and it often was a severe strain upon the profits of business to feed and clothe his large family.

Eoline had studied until she was seventeen.

At that age she began to appreciate the fact that she was one more to feed, clothe, and educate, in a family already crowded.

There was no word spoken to throw this burden of obligation upon her, but once there, she felt keenly the great kindness that had made her life all happiness.

"Uncle," she said, coming to his side one evening, as he sat alone in the sitting-room, "do you think you could let me take German lessons?"

"German lessons!"

John ruffled his hair after a fashion he had when seriously disturbed, and looked at Eoline.

He hated to deny any of the children a reasonable wish, but every coin of extra expense was a coin to be hardly earned and carefully saved.

"Mrs. Harding asked me to-day if I would join the new class," said Eoline, "and I was thinking, uncle, if I studied hard, perhaps I could take Miss Gresham's place next year.

"Miss Gresham prepares the children for Professor Schorm, and has carried me now as far as she teaches.

"I think one year with Professor Schorm would fit me to take her place.

"She is to be married next vacation."

Such a wilderness as John made of his hair while little Eoline spoke is seldom seen.

His boys he expected to face the world on their own account.

Three of them were already in small situations—but the girls he had expected to keep at home until they married or died.

And here was Eoline, the most delicate of all, the youngest but one, looking for means to earn a living.

"I will try to manage the lessons, Eoline," he said, "but I am sorry you feel any obligation about earning money by teaching.

"I want you to consider yourself my child in all things."

"I do—I always did," Eoline said, earnestly; "but if I can clothe myself and Nettie, it would help you a little, and I want to help you.

"Aunt Mary has Sue, Lily and Jennie to help her keep house and sew, and I could be spared."

So, after some further talk, it was arranged that Eoline was to join Professor Schorm's class, and Mrs. Harding consented to keeping Miss Gresham's position for her if she studied well.

It was fully understood in the seminary, and the professor knew that Eoline aspired to the task of training younger pupils in the rudiments of his language, before he took them higher into its literature.

He was not a young man, nor a handsome one.

He carried the weight of forty three years as if they numbered sixty, had grey hairs sprinkled among the brown ones, and large blue eyes, dimmed by excessive study.

His salary at the seminary was increased by a few private pupils, but all told, his income was small.

Still it sufficed for his modest wants, bought him a book occasionally, and left a little nest-egg at the bank for a rainy day, or a lonely old age.

He stooped a little, bending habitually over his studies, and his language was slow and deliberate, his English was grammatical, but formal.

Altogether, Mrs. Harding had long ago decided, precisely the man for a position amongst young ladies, one not calculated to charm their hearts or imaginations, or yield to their fascinations.

It must be confessed that most of the young ladies at the seminary were rather inclined to ridicule the professor's peculiarities, to indulge in practical jokes at his expense, and imitate his slow, formal speech.

But he seemed never to notice these tokens of girlish mischief, and patiently plodded through the text-book, with thirteen pairs of feminine eyes, saucy or pouting, as lessons were perfect or faulty, apparently unnoticed by his own.

It might have been the prospect of their future association that first drew Wilhelm Schorm and Eoline to pay especial attention to their share of the hour of tuition.

It was often Eoline's pleasure to linger, after the class was dismissed, to discuss some knotty point, to ask for some further information, or call the professor's attention to some new point of interest.

And Wilhelm Schorm, ever patient and willing, found some pleasure above the mere performance of duty, in guiding Eoline safely over all difficulties.

The intellect that had never been keenly roused in the routine of schoolstudies, wakened to new life as Eoline outstripped the class, and found her own delight in being led over new fields of study by Professor Schorm.

Only because she was to be his assistant next year, Professor Schorm began a course of evening lessons at Mr. Graham's, where a corner of the sitting-room was given to teacher and pupil, and Eoline learned German and learned to reverence the giant intellect that could yet stoop to the minutest details of tuition.

She would listen, absorbed, while the professor, to teach her fluency in conversation, talked to her of some of his own favorite studies, of his home, of the treasures of art in the country he had left.

She wondered why the evenings seemed dull when the professor was not there.

She studied earnestly, for was she not to attempt Miss Gresham's duties, and was not every effort more than repaid by her increased ability to comprehend the professor's words?

Nearly a year Eoline had been Wilhelm Schorm's pupil, when one evening he told her a story in German.

He told her of a man who had early in life been forced into poverty's cruel path, who had left home and friends to seek food and shelter by teaching his own tongue in a foreign country.

He told her how this man, shutting his heart against all gentle influence, lived only in his books, his studies, his scientific researches, until he passed the portals of his youth, and was prematurely worn and aged.

Then he told her how upon this weary world-worn heart, love stole in, unsuspected, till it became too strong to be again thrust out, yet was utterly hopeless.

He told her of the young face that was ever respectful and gentle, of the sweet voice, that was always musical and low.

He pictured the bright young life just entering life's arena, the hopeless, weary one passing it upon the road-side, with a blessing and a prayer.

That ever they could mingle, he did not hint, and Eoline's soft eyes grew tender and as she took the lesson, not to her brain but to her heart.

She went softly to her own room after the professor left her, and pondered long over his story.

She recognized clearly the two pictured lives.

Love was a strange new idea, for which her heart was not yet prepared.

Love!

Love meant a hero to worship, a beau ideal of graceful manhood before whom to bow in reverence, or a bright young life to make new sunshine!

Love!

Love might mean a prince to bring vast wealth, to gratify all her girlish desires, to give her untold riches for her uncle.

Love could not come to her in the guise of middle-age, poverty, timidity, and a strange language.

The next day there came a piece of news that drove speculation upon love's mysteries far from Eoline's heart.

Her grandfather, the unknown father of her father, was dying, and had sent for her.

He was in Y——, and Eoline must hasten sending word when a carriage should meet her at the station.

It was all a confused whirl.

The packing, the departure, the journey and arrival.

Then there was the strange new home, an aunt, who was another stranger to welcome her, the dying man, who needed constant care.

Eoline scarcely knew how the next three weeks passed, but death came, a funeral, and after that the news that she would be the possessor of five hundred thousand dollars, when she was twenty-one years old.

In the meantime, it was her grandfather's desire that she should remain with her aunt travel with her, and learn something of life outside of her native town.

Uncle John cordially consented, uneelfishly glad for Eoline, and three months after her grandfather's death, the young girl was on her way to the Continent.

Wilhelm Schorm heard the news, as a man might hear his death warrant.

Eoline, poor, with the prospect of teaching in the seminary for a livelihood, might have been his to love and cherish, might have come to the shelter of his humble home, have found in his love peace and happiness.

But Eoline, wealthy and courted, her beauty praised by honeyed words, in the whirl of fashionable society—that Eoline would never smile again, as her girlish innocence she had smiled on her old German teacher.

The weary routine of duty was more heart-breaking than ever, now Eoline's soft brown eyes were never to be raised to his in eager questioning.

Day after day the round of study was mechanically performed, and Wilhelm Schorm was more of a recluse than ever in his leisure hours.

He was sitting in the tiny study of his own home, one evening, when the snow lay piled against the window, and winter's reign was fairly established for the fourth time since Eoline went away.

How long it was since her voice had greeted him; her face made his fairest picture.

He had heard of her often; knew she was prosperous and well.

But he longed unutterably only once more to see her face, to hear her voice.

There were tears in his eyes when the servant brought him a letter.

A letter was a novelty in his lonely life, yet there was no eagerness in his listless hands as he opened it.

Inside, upon tinted paper, was written, in fair German, the story he had told Eoline the last time he had seen her.

Only, where he had ceased, the story went on.

It told, now, how the bright young life drifted away for a time from the love that had surrounded it.

The glitter of the world tempted it to rove here and there.

How other love met it, but wakened no response, till, questioning her own heart, the wanderer found all its love had been given years before where such pure devotion had been offered and carelessly passed by.

It told of the wanderer's return, hoping, yet fearful, to see if the true love still awaited her.

Then, in English, in Eoline's hand were a few words only—

"If I read your story right, Wilhelm, if my heart has truly translated its sequel, will you come to my old home, where I wait for you?

"EOLINE."

He found her changed, yet the same.

More beautiful, more easy of manner, but ever as gentle and pure as the maiden he had loved.

Her aunt, too, was dead, and she had come to her old home to lift some of its burdens from her uncle's shoulders, and to seek Wilhelm.

They were married very soon, and moved into a house Eoline bought, where Wilhelm's library is an unceasing fountain of delight—a house where perfect love reigns, bringing harmony and happiness to two hearts.

Mrs. Harding has lost both German professor and assistant.

In a large circle of appreciating friends Professor Schorm and Eoline are ever gladly welcomed, and it is quite often remarked that Professor Schorm dropped twenty years of his age when Eoline came home.

LITTLE THINGS.—Once upon a time a wandering fakir came to an Indian village. He was old and travel-worn. The people, thinking him a holy man, left their duties and followed him.

As they crowded close upon him, praying his blessing, he cried, "Avoid me, touch me not! I carry fire and fury and famine with me!" They searched him, and found nothing but a string of beads and a brass jar.

As the fakir passed a shop, he took a drop of honey from a jar, smeared it on a wall, and passed from the town. The honey attracted the flies. A lizard crept out of the wall and ate the flies. A cat caught the lizard. A dog seeing the cat playing with her prey, came up and worried the cat. The owner of the cat and the owner of the dog interfered, and soon both animals lay dead in the street, and each man declared the other guilty of killing his favorite. The matter was taken before the judge, who unjustly decided in favor of the dog in spite of his being the offender.

The villagers took sides on the question, and a riot ensued, houses were burned, gardens were destroyed, rice fields despoiled. Soldiers were sent to quell the disturbance, but they took sides with the citizens and captured the fort.

A neighboring rajah, seeing his opportunity, marched against the town, burning and destroying as he went. The war spread through the province, lasting for months. Famine and pestilence seized upon those whom the sword spared. Then many remembered the fakir and his drop of honey. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

IT is stated that the custom of making New Year calls is on the wane. Last year "best society in New York merely hung out baskets." To travel about a city all day, in a suit hired for the occasion, dropping cards in a basket, is about as wild and hilarious fun as to sit on a fence and see your best girl go by with another fellow.

Bric-a-Brac.

A LONG RAIN.—In 1348 it rained from midsummer to Christmas, so that there was not one day and night dry together. This wet season caused great floods, and a pestilence which raged a whole year. The earth was at the same time barren, and even the sea did not produce such plenty of fish as formerly. The mortality was so great that in the city of London, two hundred bodies were buried every day in the Charter-house yard, besides those interred in other common burying places; this lasted from Candlemas to Easter.

STRANGE "ADS."—Some very curiously worded advertisements creep into the newspapers now and then. Here, for instance, are three amusing examples of composition which an English traveler says he read in one issue of a London paper: "Lost—A camera brooch, representing Venus and Adonis whilst walking in Sandy Mount, on Sunday last." "Wanted—A nurse for an infant between twenty-five & thirty, a member of the Church of England & without followers." "Mrs. and Miss May have left-off clothing of every description. An inspection is invited."

THE FIRST BREAD.—The first bread is supposed to have been made by the Swiss lake dwellers at a period to which no date can be assigned, although it may have quite closely approached historic times. Specimens of the bread, which was baked between two red-hot stones, have been found in the form of little circular cakes, four or five inches in diameter by an inch and a quarter thick. Wheat and barley were the cereals used, but a cake made from poppy seeds has been found among the ruins of the lake dwellings. The grains were imperfectly ground or crushed, in stone mortars, and the bread was unleavened.

QUEER TIMES.—In the South Kensington Museum, at London, is a small watch about one hundred years old, representing an apple, the golden case ornamented with grains of pearl. The cathedral church, built in Lubeck in the years 1170-1314, has a curious clock. On the end of the hour hand is a little clock which keeps exact time with the large one. There is at Rodear a small village in England, a cord model of Lincoln Cathedral, made by a plowman, which contains the extraordinary number of 1,000,000 old corks, and occupied ten years and seven months in building. Millardet, a Swiss mechanician, exhibited in London in the last century a female figure that played eighteen tunes on the piano with all the motions of natural life, the eyes following the movements of the fingers on the keys, the pressure of which produced the notes.

HABITS OF INSECTS.—Probably the most careful and interesting investigations of the habits of insects are those conducted by Sir John Lubbock. To test the hearing of bees he trained some of them to find honey placed on a music box which was kept going several hours a day for a fortnight on a lawn close to a window. The music box was then taken into the house and set close beside the window, though out of sight. The bees could not find it, though when it had been shown to them they went to it readily enough. As regards the industry of wasps, Sir John timed a bee and a wasp, for each of which he provided a store of honey, and he found that the wasp began earlier in the morning and worked on later in the day. This particular wasp began work at four in the morning, and went on without any rest or intermission till a quarter to eight in the evening, during which time she visited the store of honey one hundred and sixteen times.

THE AGE OF KISSES.—Kissing was certainly known and practiced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and practiced with an easy familiarity which shows the custom was general. Indeed, so general was the use of the kiss, that it was as usual as the bow. A gentleman taking a lady to her seat from a dance invariably kissed her and if he had not would have been voted a very badly-bred fellow. There is a story retailed in the "Broad Stone of Honor" of a knight riding through France to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. His horse cast a shoe at a certain village, seigneur the whereof had departed to the same rendezvous, but the seigneur's lady hospitably entreated the traveler. She came forth of her castle, attended by twelve damsels fair to see. "And," said the dame, "forasmuch as in England ye have such a custom as that a man may kiss a woman, therefore I will that ye kiss me, and ye shall also kiss all these my maidens." "Which thing the knight straightway did and rejoiced greatly thereat."

WOMAN'S LOT.—Woman's lot in India is not a happy one. A missionary who has just returned from the land of jungles, says: "The government of the house of the Brahmin is strictly in the hands of the man; of the father during the youth of the family, and of the eldest son after he marries. The son always takes his wife home to the paternal roof, and as the sons marry additions are built to the house until it often becomes a village in itself. In this place the women are imprisoned—literally buried alive. From the day of their marriage, which is at a very early age, they never see more of the outer world than the narrow expanse of sky and cloud that looks down upon them between the walls of their prison home. No men are allowed to enter the house but the members of the family and the priest, except on very rare occasions, and then unseen by the women. Married at ten years—for spinsterhood is abominable—mothers at twelve they die of sheer old age at about thirty."

THINGS THAT ARE NOT.

BY A. L. D.

I dreamed a dream of Love,
  That she was holy, pure, and true.
  A friend to give delight on earth,
A voice to bid man look above,
  Her constancy her only worth,
  Alas! like this she comes to very few.

I heard her sacred name
  On lips of many, young and old,
  I looked their idol in the face,
A giddy, pleasure-seeking dame,
  Whose vanity is her disgrace,
  Whose Summer friendship fades before the cold.

Is love then but a dream,
  The sweetest fancy man can know?
  Or has she broken earthly bars
And fled with her celestial gleam,
  To shine aloft among the stars
  And look with scorn upon the clods below?

When Faith and Hope are dead,
  When life has for its only aim
  To seek the passing moment's bliss,
To find sufficiency of bread,
  Man soon his highest joys will miss,
  And seeking Love will find her but a name.

TWICE MARRIED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LAURA DE ST. HILAIRE lay upon her bed all night long, counting the hours with feverish impatience, gazing drearily out on the cold moonlight, and weeping at times till the pillow shook with the violence of her sobs.

All the pretty coquetry that had seemed but a harmless means of securing Evan's love, now rose before her tortured imagination as coarse and unwomanly artifices which had only repulsed him.

The beauty, of which she had been so proud, was, in that hour of humiliation, a source of annoyance.

What was it worth if the only heart she cared to win in the wide world turned from that beauty with indifference?

Nay, was she indeed beautiful?

Not in the style of his native land, that he had been taught to admire, not like the fair blonde who had rescued her from death.

Compared to her, that creamy complexion and black, glossy hair, were in her strained imagination over-rich to coarseness,

And then her eyes so large and bright, how could any man admire them who had looked into the soft, violet orbs of Winifred Herbert?

Yes, that was indeed beauty.

What right had she to expect homage to charms so unlike, and even so inferior?

Thus the proud girl—proud in the excess of her humility—spent that long, harassing night, and the moonbeams of the early hours made her weep and turn away from their brightness.

But the dark clouds that towards the morning broke and dashed over the chateau in a storm of hail and thick snow, accorded better with her passionate, gloomy sorrow.

When she heard the first howl of the wild wind, her courage rose, and she was filled with a bitter wish to go out and watch it.

The fever in her blood was so hot, the thirst for action so pressing, that she could no longer endure the quiet of her bed.

Any change would be a relief.

Laura threw back the curtains and lighted her lamp for the morning was yet early, and the faintest rays of dawn were overshadowed by the black clouds.

With careless haste she dressed herself, all unlike the elaborate careful toilette of the evening before, and wrapping a thick shawl round her, she stepped softly into the long corridor into which her chamber opened.

But a dread of discovery—of meeting any human eye—was intolerable in her present state of mind, and she retreated into her own apartment once more.

She flung open the sash, gasping for breath.

The bitter east wind rushed in, dashing coldly over her face and bosom.

She received it with a sense of relief.

Her burning cheeks grew cooler as the snow-flakes beat upon them.

Her excitement rose with keen sympathy, her feelings responded to the storm.

What cared she for the snow that covered her dress and jet hair, or the hailstones that rattled against the window panes?

The storm in her soul was replied to by the storm without.

She felt like a desolate bird, drifting wildly with the tempest; a poor white gull, that had been lured far, far out to sea, and must now brave the elements alone.

A magnificent old elm tree that sheltered her window seemed to her morbid imaginings an emblem of herself.

Its branches waved and tossed themselves up and down, to and fro, playing with the wind and snow, and flinging its boughs on the wind as it rushed by.

To Laura the tree seemed human, and suffering with pain as she was.

But how bravely the forest monster bore itself!

With that lofty grandeur it lifted its bowed head, as every gust passed by!

How fiercely its branches thrashed the roof, and knocked against the verandah, scattering small branches on the ground, where the rain beat them down, as the world deals with fallen humanity!

The window where Laura stood opened on a large covered balcony, where she had often sat thinking of the future, and of Evan.

She sprang out on the wet floor; here was room to breathe; here the wind raved and rioted as pride and sorrow battled in her own soul.

She walked up and down the long gallery, sobbing faint echoes to the deeper sough of the storm.

Sometimes low cries broke from her lips, those cries which she had stifled in her room from fear of being heard.

But as these expressions of grief escaped her, the wind but tossed them out on the storm, exulting over them, as coarse humanity might have done had it been able to divine her sorrow, and drag it before the public eye.

As her first wild passion abated, Laura thought of all this, and she triumphed over her own powers of self-control and concealment.

She would have no confidant but that sympathising storm.

Not even Paul should guess how her pride had been crushed, her heart stabbed to the core.

As for Evan, he must never know of her humiliation.

She would meet him on his next visit with a pride and indifference more than equal to his own.

And then she would gather round her the friends whom she had lately neglected, the admirers she had slighted for his sake.

Many of the magnates of the province would gladly have laid their titles and fortunes at her feet, but for her cold repulsion.

She would collect a party, invite Evan among the rest, and let him see her receive graciously the homage of men far his superior in rank and wealth, if not in——

Oh no! her heart still said he could have no superior in aught else,

And he should see how men could adore her, and be grateful for one of the smiles which he had not cared to obtain.

And then—ah, what then?

She would go away, she cared not whither.

Paul would bring Lucy to take her place as his companion and loving friend, and she could not stay.

It would be to great a contrast to see their happiness, though she would rejoice in it; and then, their very sympathy would be softening and yet galling to her spirit.

But where should she go?

Without love, without an object, a woman can go nowhere without finding a desert.

She ceased her restless walk, as the idea crept over her, and stood leaning against a pillar of the verandah, pale, drenched, and hopeless.

She was chilled, body and soul; chilled with a coldness like unto death.

"Laura!"

The word fell upon her ears.

A cry died in her throat; her heavy eyes filled with a wild lustre, for the dawning light revealed to her the form of Evan Lloyd.

He stood directly before her; he had passed from an open window, and swung himself by the branches of the tree on to the verandah, where he had seen her standing in the imperfect light.

"Laura, my beloved," said he, "why are you out in a storm like this? you are tempting death."

She looked at him with her wild eyes.

Her lips parted.

She could not utter a word.

Her speech seemed chained down in her bosom.

"What ails my precious one?" he said, more tenderly than she had ever heard him speak before.

"I was detained late last night by business, but I would come, even at that untimely hour, and when I arrived, your brother said that you were ill, and had gone to bed.

"The very thought was enough to keep me awake; and then the storm brought me to the window, and I saw you thus."

Laura wound her arm round a pillar of the verandah, for the thrill that ran through every nerve of her frame made her feel faint.

"You came last night," she said, "in the darkness, you wished—you——"

"Yes, I came, and found her whom I most panted to see absent," he replied; "I could not have endured the suspense of another night had I not felt I was near you, Laura."

There was another pause, and the girl trembled so violently that Evan passed his arm round her unreproved, and drew her to his strong support.

"Will you not ask me what that suspense was?" he whispered—"what was the question I longed yet dreaded to ask?"

She spoke not.

He felt the quick beating of her heart against his.

He looked tenderly on her for a few moments, and then said, in the rich, tender tones she had heard oft before, and that went like soft music to her heart, making every nerve thrill with delirious, dreamy rapture, "Laura—Laura de St. Hilaire, will you be my wife?"

CHAPTER XXXII.

WEARILY had the Winter months passed for Winifred Herbert.

The weather had been unusually stormy and wet, and there had been little chance of the usual intercourse between herself and the family at the Grange.

The mill stream had more than once overflowed its banks, to the great discomfort and even loss of Farmer Herbert, and of the villagers who lived in its neighborhood, and it was an absolute impossibility for some weeks for Winifred, had she been so disposed, to leave her home.

But, alas! the poor girl had no such wish.

Heartsick, desolate, terrified at Evan's silence, and the fearful suspicions to which it gave rise, she shrank from any society, and most of all from that of Lucy and her mother.

Winifred felt a kind of guilt in their presence, as if it was adding to her fault to present herself to the mother and sister of Evan under a false character, even a false name.

And the very certainty of hearing the dreaded name of St. Hilaire in familiar, constant use, the incidental mention of Evan's constant intercourse with them, which inevitably followed from Lucy's engagement to Paul, was actual torture to the unhappy girl.

Lady Lloyd guessed something of this, but even she knew not the full measure of the bitterness and misery endured by that poor young girl, and though she was kind and loving as a mother when they met, she could not minister to sorrow, the cause and amount of which was a mystery to her.

And thus had passed the gloomy November, the genial Christmas.

Now the New Year had opened, and the pale snowdrop began to appear as harbinger of the coming Spring, fit emblem of that fair, pure, fragile-looking creature, whose heart sank, and whose beautiful head drooped yet more as weeks went wearily on, and still no letter from Evan.

There were many besides the family at the Grange, and the anxious parents of Winifred herself, who, with anxiety and grave suspicion, noted the change in her.

Dr. Davis grumbled and scolded, and inwardly anathematised the young rascal, to whom he attributed the blame, and more than once seriously thought of talking to Sir William on the subject.

Charles Thornton, too, had noted with deep sympathy the sweet girl's pale cheek, and sad, touching eyes, the evident depression of her spirits, and the nervous agitation which she could not control.

At the slightest surprise or unusual occurrence, a step, the mention of apparently the most indifferent name or word, she would start, change color, look round with a restless, inquiring glance, very unlike the soft expression of her large, thoughtful eyes.

To Mr. Thornton's idea there was more than the ordinary depression of a love-sick girl in all this.

He had suffered severely himself, and the struggle, though over, had been a hard one, such as leaves traces of the inward strife for many a long day.

But it was very different from the feverish, wearing agony which the symptoms he observed in Winifred Herbert betokened, and he felt painfully confident of the existence of some deeper cause than disappointed affection, or even suspense yet more depressing for the poor girl's ill-concealed suffering.

Had Mr. Thornton, or any other of those who loved Winifred Herbert, known all the dreadful truth, they would have wondered how that delicate frame could support such a load of anguish.

One night, after one of the unaccountable bursts of causeless hysterical weeping which occasionally varied the dull monotonous depression of her daughter's manner, Mrs. Herbert observed to her husband, "This won't do any longer, husband.

"The child will fret herself into the grave under our very eyes.

"I only wish she had never left home, then all this pining and fancifulness about nothing at all would never have been given way to by a daughter of mine.

"But, let bygones be bygones; I don't mean to reproach you, husband, nor the poor girl either; only, perhaps you'll take my advice another time—that's all!"

Farmer Herbert knew pretty well the nature of his worthy, but somewhat impracticable wife.

He wisely ignored the extraneous matter of her discourse, and merely replied to its real purport.

"You are right, wife," said he; "something must be done; but the question is, what?"

"If one could but find out what ailed the child," mused Mrs. Herbert; "but if I ask her, she only looks pitiful, or cries, and says 'Nothing, if I would but leave her alone,' and I have no heart to urge her further."

The tears trembled in the mother's eyes as she spoke.

Llewellyn Herbert was no common man.

Though there was the plain bluntness of the yeoman in his manner and his dress, the heart was delicate and chivalrous as the highest born knight of the race from which he sprang.

He could comprehend the shrinking delicacy of a young girl's heart better than his less sensitive wife.

"Better not torment the child, my dear," said the farmer; "a little time may explain it all; but, wife, have you never thought that it was more the mind than the body that was shaken in that terrible accident, when our child saved that French girl? She has never been herself since that day."

"You mean the child is jealous," said the proud mother, "as if any man who looked at our Winifred, and knew how gentle she is, would think of a showy, dark-looking French girl like that! But 'tis girl's ways, I know."

"Our daughter is good and lovely too, Bessie," said the farmer.

"Heaven grant we may never be humbled for our pride for her.

"I sometimes think we have been quite careful enough of her, and that we let young Lloyd here to often, after she returned from school."

Mrs. Herbert flushed up indignantly, but the next moment the angry retort died away on her lips, for there were many little circumstances that confirmed too surely her husband's suspicions.

"What can be done?" she asked despairingly.

"It is hard to see one's only child pining away before one's face, and not know the cause; and she won't hear of calling in Dr. Davis.

"It seems to make her worse when I even hint at it."

"I tell you what, wife," said the farmer, "that reminds me that I am going to Wrexham to-morrow.

"What say you to going with me and having a quiet talk with the good doctor about Winifred?

"He loves her as if she was his own; and, rough as he seems, is a wise and kind man."

Mrs. Herbert gladly assented.

Indeed the very idea of relieving her mind by a talk with some one sanctioned by her husband, was a blessing to the good woman.

Truth to tell, the restraint she had hitherto been forced to put on her loquacity where Winifred was concerned, had been a serious addition to her anxieties.

Yet she dared not transgress her husband's disorder with their gossiping though well-meaning neighbors.

And thus the anticipated delight of unburdening her pent-up anxieties, and receiving sympathy and counsel from the worthy doctor, was enough to keep her awake during a good portion of the night, and ensure an unusual stir in her over-active arrangements on the following morning.

Winifred was alone, alone with her sorrow, that crushing, gnawing sorrow, which was eating away her strength, and poisoning the very springs of youth and life.

To be allowed to indulge her grief unobserved, to sit in melancholy abstraction, or pace the garden walks with the restlessness of secret sorrow.

To look as wretched as she felt, and give vent to unrepressed sighs, and clasp her hands in despairing appeals for aid in her heavy, overpowering anguish, was the only pleasure, or rather the only consolation left to her.

The misery of restraint, the necessity of looking, and speaking, and employing herself as usual, was suspended for the moment, and Winifred was thankful even for this partial respite from her burden.

About two hours had passed since the farmer and his wife had left the house.

Winifred had managed to perform with tolerable propriety the trifling duties that devolved on her in her mother's absence, and to give a few necessary directions to the servant who had been for years the factotum of the mistress of Llanover Farm.

Then Winifred went to her own room, and, locking the door, sat down by the open window, through which the bright sunshine and soft air of an early Spring day streamed with animating and refreshing sweetness.

She leaned her head on her hand, and gazed pensively and half unconsciously on the familiar objects before her.

Almost every one of them was associated with Evan, and some well-remembered incident of childish sports, or more mature and precious intercourse.

Now it all seemed like a dream.

Could it really be that those things had happened—that those happy days had been hers—that she had been the chosen of Evan Lloyd—that she was his true and lawful wife.

And where was he? her lover, her husband?

Far away in distant lands, at the side of her beautiful rival, while she remained lonely, desolate, forsaken, and yet forbidden to assert her rights by the sacred obligation of a solemn oath.

Suspicious fears more terrible still, were gaining ground in the poor girl's heart, which, if true, would make the observance of her oath yet more terrible in its consequences to herself and those who loved her.

The girl sat absorbed in those wretched, maddening thoughts, perfectly unconscious of the time that had passed since she had entered her place of refuge.

But the sound of voices roused her from her abstraction.

It was some one speaking in a low, rapid tone, as if relating some incident, which, to judge from the interjections of surprise and interest which escaped the worthy Jenny from time to time, was one of great wonder and importance.

"Dear me!"—"Well, who would have thought it?"—and "In foreign parts, too?" reached the ears of the languid Winifred at intervals, and roused her from her apathy to approach the open window, and obtain a more accurate idea of the speakers, and their subject of discussion.

The speakers were hidden from view by the gable of the house, but Winifred soon recognized the voice, and her eagerness to ascertain the purport of their conversation redoubled.

It was Hannah, the old servant of the Grange, whose tones she knew so well, and in every variation of mood or subject, that

she could almost tell the nature of the communication from the way in which it was spoken.

But in this case she could at first only decide that it was one of supreme importance in the good woman's ideas; but whether pleasant or otherwise she could not distinguish.

She could only imagine that the predominant idea in her own mind was connected with all that belonged to the Grange, and she strained her ears eagerly to catch what Hannah was saying.

"They leave next week," was the first words she heard.

"It will be a sore expense for the master; but in course—it won't much matter to him now, though—there's saving enough at the Grange, more than I ever remember before.

"And I would not say it to any one but you, Jenny, who are almost as attached to the family as I am."

The speakers now appeared to come inside the porch, and Winifred was able to hear more distinctly what was said, though she lost a few words from time to time, when the voices dropped lower than usual.

"Miss Lucy's a sweet young lady, and I love her almost like Miss Winifred herself," Jenny was saying when the entrance into the house had been effected.

"Indeed they're like sisters, and I used to think they would be so one day—but now——"

"Of course, 'tis out of the question," replied Hannah, rather stiffly; "and, I can't but say, 'tis a good thing in great many ways.

"The young lady's got a bonny fortune as well as a bonny face, and comes of as good blood as our own; at least, so far as foreigners can be as good as English folks."

Poor Winifred felt the blood run cold in her veins, and she clenched her hands tightly to keep back the cry of pain that rose to her lips.

She listened still, determined to know the worst, and brave the torture at once.

"You may say that, Hannah," returned Jenny; "but I'll back our Miss Winifred for beauty, and blood too, against any foreigner of them.

"I'd like to know which showed most courage, when the French lady fell into the water? To my thinking, 'tis most a pity Miss Winifred got her out."

"Well, I don't much like foreigners, myself, Jenny," said Hannah; "but you see, Miss Laura and the Count are both Protestants, or my master would not have given his consent; and so they are to be married in London, 'cause Miss Laura don't quite like coming here, and my master don't like Miss Lucy being married in France. And two prettier brides, or finer young bridegrooms, won't be found all London over, I'll be bound."

"But 'tis very sudden like," said Jenny.

"Perhaps not," returned Hannah, jealous for the honor of the family; "Miss Lucy's been engaged this five months, and more, and I expect Mr. Evan's been courting Miss Laura all this time, though they have kept it so quiet. I had my own thoughts while they were over here together, but I am not one that tells all they know, nor to every one they meet."

"Well, it can't be no secret to any one now," said the ungrateful confidante. "You said it was to be in less than a month, didn't you, Hannah?"

"Yes, so my lady told me, as soon as ever they can get ready," replied Hannah; "and they say you can get anything for money in London, so it won't take long."

"Well, come in and have a glass of mead," said Jenny.

"It is in prime order now, and I'll back my mistress against all Wales, for that—or anything else in that way.

"She's a rare housekeeper, for sure, is Mrs. Herbert."

The invitation was apparently accepted, for a door was opened and shut, and the voices died away into silence.

Winifred remained standing at her open door, leaning against the door way, and holding convulsively by the handle for support.

She did not faint, nor weep, nor even moan in her terrible agony.

She stood there—rigid and motionless—her face utterly colorless, and the large eyes, dull and tearless, though the lids were tinged with a hot, scarlet line, as if the fever of the brain had burnt the white skin.

She did not for a moment doubt the truth of what she had heard.

Even that miserable consolation was denied to her.

The last vestige of hope, the lingering trust in Evan's faith and love, to which she had through long months clung with woman's devoted confidence, was torn away.

Evan was faithless, and she was a disgraced, rejected wife.

In that first crushing hour of misery, Winifred thought not of revenge, or resistance to her doom.

Her only idea, her only wish or hope, was to hide herself from every human being, to go away to some solitude, and there expiate her fault by penitence and humble prostration under her bitter punishment—oh, if it might be by death!

She was like a stricken fawn, so crushed, so unresisting, so helpless in her meek wretchedness.

The striking of the old-fashioned kitchen clock roused the unhappy girl from the numbed torpor that had seized her.

Something must be done; she dared not, could not stay in her home, or meet the eyes of the parents on whom she had brought shame and disgrace.

She never dreamed of violating her oath, even in that dreadful hour, by asserting her rights as Evan's lawful wife; and even if she had, would any one but perhaps her own parents believe her unsupported words?

No; it was better to lie down and die, and then Evan would be free and happy, and she would be forgiven when she was gone, and kindly tears would be dropped on her memory, even by those who might blame her most.

She hastily threw on a cloak and large hat, and was about to descend the short staircase, when a sudden impulse induced her to pause; she listened for a moment, all was still.

She stole along the passage that led to her mother's room, hastily opened the lid of an old-fashioned bureau, took from it two small portraits taken in the days of her parents' courtship, concealed them in her bosom, and then, gliding hastily and noiselessly down stairs, left the home of her childhood, and went forth a wanderer in the cold, dreary world;—a broken lily on its troubled waters, drifting hopelessly, unresistingly, to a strange, unfriendly shore—

Anywhere, anywhere out of this world.

Winifred went forth; but where could she go?

Who would receive her?

Where in the wide, wide world, was there a roof to shelter her, save that which now seemed to frown her away?

As these dreary questions sank into her heart, she heard a sharp rattle of wheels coming up the road.

It was her father and mother.

She sprang forward with the speed of a frightened gazelle, and before the old dog-cart came up, had gained the shelter of the thick wood.

She peered through the trees to get a last look of the dear faces she might never see again; of those beloved parents whom she had offended beyond hope of pardon.

She drew back, terrified and panic-struck, for there was a third person in the vehicle, and one of whom poor Winifred stood in even greater awe than her parents.

It was Dr. Davis; she cowered beneath the bushes till the dog-cart was out of sight then she rose and wandered on and on in the deepest recesses of the wood, till her feeble frame was totally exhausted with cold and fatigue, and yet more with the terrible blow that had fallen upon her. She sank down on the trunk of a tree, wet and cold with the damp ground and leaves, till in ist with the showers of the previous night; but her forehead was burning, and strange, fevered thoughts passed through her brain.

With a sort of dreamy pain, Winifred thought of Evan.

He had left her to all this—betrayed her into something worse than death.

A strange, dreamy apathy came over her, and for a short time she sank into a sort of sleep, or rather unconsciousness.

"Winifred! Winifred Herbert!" said a voice, and a figure bent over her, and darling lips touched her forehead.

Winifred opened her eyes wildly, and for a moment gazed round, bewildered at her position, unable to comprehend either the place where she was, or the bold intruder who thus presumed to address her. It was Hugh Evans.

"How dare you!" she exclaimed, angrily. "Leave me this instant Mr. Evans! I insist on it."

"Foolish child," he said, with a quiet, half-contemptuous, half-tender look, "you forget yourself, and would cast away your best friends; only, luckily for yourself, I am not disposed to listen to you."

Winifred shuddered.

"Leave me," she repeated, faintly. "I want no one — nothing but peace and quiet."

The man only laughed—a silent, low triumphant laugh—and sat down on a fallen trunk, by the tree on which Winifred still rested from sheer inability to move."

"I can't be angry with you, pretty one," he said, "especially when you are at my mercy and yet can't understand your own interests. 'Tis well for you that men are not all alike. I'm not quite so fickle in my tastes as Mr. Evan Lloyd, though may be I've had less encouragement to be constant."

A low cry of pain escaped the girl, and she shrank away from her detested companion as far as she could, while her poor heart beat wildly, and her whole frame shook with terror and shame.

"Do not frighten yourself, you silly child," said Hugh, with a sort of protecting, fatherlike tone. "If you will trust me, I will take care of you, and see you righted, and stand by you, whatever the world may say or do."

"Winifred," said Hugh, looking on her with calm pity, "I will do all I can for you; but you must submit to your fate, when it is useless to resist. Forget the past, as he has; and do what he is doing; that is the best advice I can give you."

The girl's hand sank hopelessly; so hopelessly, that even Hugh's heart smote him.

"Don't look like that!" he said, trying to take her hand; "it seems hard, perhaps, but it is true; and I am your best friend, as well as truest lover, to tell you so, though you can't think it just now. Won't you trust me, Winifred?"

"I can trust no one," she replied, despairingly; "no one. I am alone, an outcast from those who loved me; cast off by my——"

She stopped.

The word that was on her lips she had sworn not to utter to any human being, and even in that hour of outraged and desolate despair she dared not break her oath.

"Why have you left your home, Winifred? Have your parents discarded you?" asked Hugh, eagerly.

"No, no, no!" she exclaimed. "I could not bear their horror, their curse on the wretched child who has brought shame on their heads. They do not know it yet—not yet," she repeated dreamily.

"If you will be guided by me, they need never know it," whispered Hugh. "They shall never know that you were deceived, that——"

He whispered a few words in her ear—such words as brought the crimson over her white face, even to the tips of the ear and the roots of the fair hair, and made her crouch lower and lower till she sank on the very ground, her head concealed in her hands, and her whole attitude the very embodiment of shame and despair.

A well-pleased smile crossed Hugh's hard face; she was in his power now. He must not resort to any harder means for fulfilling his promise and accomplishing his own long-cherished plans.

"My poor child," he said, gently raising her from her prostrate position, "if you persist in this causeless anguish you will kill yourself."

"Believe me, it rests with yourself to avoid all the consequences you so naturally dread. Only be advised by me, and all will be well, and in a short time you will learn to forget this girlish escapade of yours."

Winifred did not reply.

She allowed him to raise and support her in his arms.

Her eyes were fixed on vacancy, and her pale lips were closely, rigidly fixed together.

Hugh felt the small hand that dropped listlessly on his arm.

It was cold and clammy, and yet she breathed regularly.

He could feel the heart beat.

She had not fainted, though her mind and body seemed to be paralyzed.

He was perplexed and terrified.

Tears and sobs would have been natural enough, but there was something terrible in this numb and quiet stillness, so death-like, and yet without the insensibility of a swoon.

He spoke to her tenderly; then he tried a harsher tone.

It was all unheeded; still the same hopeless apathy.

When he addressed her, her eyes would perhaps meet his for a moment with a wild, startled look, and then turn away again, as if the words had failed to reach her ear.

"This will never do," muttered Hugh; "there will be a hue and cry for her soon, and it won't suit me to be found with her in the wood in this state. I must carry her if she won't come without.

"Winifred," he said, bending down, so as to attract her notice, "will you come with me? You cannot stay here. They would find you, you know; do you not understand me, Winifred? Your father will come and look for you, and take you back again."

"No, no," she murmured, with a shudder.

But still she sat in the same hopeless attitude.

"Would you not like to see Evan?" he said, using the name he thought would be most familiar to her.

She looked up.

"Shall I take you to him—to your husband?"

"Hush, hush!" she screamed; "you must not call him that; he will say I told you; no—no—I never did."

It was at least something that he had roused her, and he went on in the same strain.

"I will call him anything you like; but you would like to go to him, would you not, and ask him if it is true, Winifred? Perhaps he would change again when he saw you."

"Would he—would he?" she exclaimed, starting. "Is it not too late? Oh, I will bless you if you can tell me there is any hope."

"Come with me, and I will take you to London," said Hugh; "and then you can go to him, and talk to him yourself; and then you would also see the young French girl; and, as you saved her life, who knows but what she might give him up for your sake?"

A faint flush sprang to her colorless cheek.

"Yes," she said; "yes, I will, I will; only swear to me that you will take me to him—that you are not deceiving me. I cannot believe anyone now," she added, despairingly.

"I swear to you that I will take you to London, Miss Herbert; and you have heard that the marriage is to take place there. Is that enough?"

"Yes, yes—I beg your pardon," she replied, with touching humility; "only if you remember, you said at first it was no use; and I thought—I was frightened, you know."

"You thought that I was as false as your grand lover," he said; "well, I forgive you. But, we must start; or we shall be too late. I thought I heard some one calling you just now."

Winifred sprang up, and tried to hurry on a few steps, but her strength failed her, and she would have fallen had not Hugh caught her in his arms.

"Let me carry you," he said; "it is not far; I have a carriage waiting, and you will soon be where you can get a little rest, without any one being able to find you, let them be ever so clever."

She drew back.

"There, don't be squeamish, you silly child."

In spite of Winifred's involuntary shudder of disgust, he lifted her as if she were an infant, and strode rapidly on through the deepest recesses of the wood, which the thickening gloom would have made impervious to any one less familiar with its recesses than himself, but which he treaded as fearlessly and unhesitatingly as he would have done the paths of a well-known garden.

Scarcely was his broad figure lost to view, ere a loud, wailing cry was heard on the silent air.

"Winny, Winny! — my darling — my child!"

It was the voice of her father, Llewllyn Herbert.

* * * * * *

With a heavy and foreboding heart the worthy Doctor Davis had yielded to the entreaties of his old friends, and accompanied them to the farm.

In truth, the good man had most determinedly smothered, even from himself the growing fears that his professional skill and natural penetration had but too surely conceived as to to the secret causes of his favorite's mental and bodily prostration.

Doctor Davis had brought Winifred into the world, and watched her from infancy with all but paternal pride and affection, and the idea of sorrow or disgrace falling on this sweet young creature—so beautiful, pure, and guileless, was more than he could endure even to contemplate.

And so he had striven hard to shut his eyes, or to hope that some explanation would be given of the phenomena that perplexed him, or that the termination of the little, yet painfully exciting, romance, would at any rate avert the worst consequences from his pet's guileless, trusting heart.

But the news which had already reached him of Evan's intended marriage, and the long recital given by Mrs. Herbert of her daughter's alarming state of health and spirits, had terribly shaken the poor doctor's self-deluding attempt at blindness.

He wanted to refuse to go home with the anxious mother, in spite of her earnest entreaties, and had indeed made more trivial and hesitating difficulties than Mrs. Herbert had ever heard from his decided lips before, in the whole course of her long acquaintance with him.

But she would not be put off.

And after inwardly rating himself pretty soundly for being such a contemptible coward, he consented to return with them, and subject Winifred to a severe cross-examination as to her symptoms of depression.

"I tell you what it is, doctor," observed Mrs. Herbert, as they approached the farm, "she's either more sick than I ever remember her since she had the measles so dreadfully bad, or else she's an obstinate girl, bent on breaking my very heart. And that's what I don't believe of my Winifred."

"Nor I," said he briefly and emphatically.

Alas! he thought it not unlikely that, after all, the mother's heart might be broken.

Once arrived at the farm, Mrs. Herbert's first care was to offer some refreshments to her guest, and then she went in search of her daughter.

"Don't tell her I'm here, Mrs. Herbert," said the doctor.

"No, I shan't."

"Let her come down as she would just to meet you and her father."

Full of diplomatic caution, the mother went up, bent on justifying the doctor's compliment to her sagacity, when, lo! the room was empty, and she hurried back, annoyed and somewhat angry at the failure of her child to welcome her on her return.

"Where's Winifred, Jenny?" she inquired.

"Deary me, ma'am, how should I know?" replied Jenny.

Mrs. Herbert looked at her with widely-staring eyes.

"I ain't seen her for two hours. Ain't she in her own room?"

Mrs. Herbert didn't stop to make reply, but hurried on.

The house and garden were searched, but no trace of the missing child could be found.

In an interval of Mrs. Herbert's torrent of wonder and vexation, not unmingled with reproach, at the unexplained absence of her daughter from her home, the doctor said quietly:

"Jenny, was any one here during your mistress' absence?"

"Deary me, doctor," replied Jenny, "who should come, I'd like to know, on market-day, when every one's gone to town?"

"Not Miss Lloyd, or her mother?" he asked.

"No a bit of them, doctor. Why, don't you know of the grand doings at the Grange? Miss Lucy's going to town to be married next week, and Mr. Evan's to get the fine lady Frenchwoman at the same time. They'll have no time to come over here, let alone bein' too fine maybe to remember old friends."

"And when did you hear all this?" asked the doctor, quietly.

"Why, in course, where I am like to hear it," replied Jenny.

"And where is that?"

"At my own home, where I bide like a respectable girl should. Hannah came over and told me about it while the mistress was away."

"And did Miss Winifred hear it?" continued the doctor.

"Not she," said Jenny: "at least, unless a word got to her through the window, which I don't think, 'cause we never spoke above our breath, and she was upstairs all the time."

The doctor questioned the girl no further.

It was but too clear to his mind.

He only hesitated as to whether it were wise to enlighten the parents as to the cause of the poor girl's restless flight from her home.

Even to him the idea of anything but a morbid desire for solitude, and escape from observation had not yet occurred.

At last he decided on the propriety of sounding the good folks as to their knowledge of what had so long been going on under their eyes.

"Farmer Herbert," said the doctor, after a few moments' hesitation, "you will excuse my taking the privilege of an old friend, and one that loves your daughter almost as well as you do. Has it never struck you that you let young Lloyd with the girl too much, and that maybe she is breaking her heart about him, while he is courting that handsome French girl, who, I am told, has nearly caught him; or, at least, let him catch her?"

"Is it true, Doctor?" said the farmer, almost fiercely.

The doctor nodded.

"And is the young man really going to be married to the girl my Winny saved at the risk of her own life."

The doctor bowed his head.

He could not speak the words that would bring grief and anguish on the poor father's heart.

"Then may God help my child, and punish the man who has dared to blight her young life," said Mr. Herbert, his manly features darkening with stern indignation. "May a father's curse rest on him till his dying day!"

"Hush, Herbert, hush!" said the doctor. "You are a God-fearing man and a brave one. It is for you to set the example of patience and fortitude to your wife and child, and not to give way like a rash, hot-headed stripling. You may need all your faith and submission, my old friend, and you know where to seek it."

"I do, I do," said the farmer, eagerly, "but it seems like to fail me where my child is concerned. She is the very apple of my eye, doctor—the treasure of my heart—and I could not answer for myself where she is concerned."

"If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out," said the doctor, solemnly. "No earthly blessing should make us forget the giver, Llewellyn Herbert, or it will maybe happen that the blessing may become our bitterest trial, our sharpest thorn."

"There is something more than you say, Doctor, to make you speak thus," said Herbert, looking at him with a haggard, anxious face. "I charge you, by your long friendship for me and mine, and our Christian brotherhood, not to keep me in the dark where I am the person who has the first claim to know the truth. What misfortune is hanging over us? Speak! and fear not to tell me the worst."

The doctor was a brave man, but he had literally no courage to execute the task imposed upon him, and yet he knew that the blow would fall, and perhaps from less friendly and cautious hands.

"Be it so my friend," said he; "and may the Lord, in whom you have trusted, sustain you!"

He then began to speak in a low, rapid voice, grasping the farmer's hand the while, like one that fears to stop, lest his breathe or his courage should fail him.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LOVER AND LORD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AN ANGEL UNAWARES" "A SHOCKING SCANDAL," "SOWING AND REAPING," "PEGGY," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.—[CONTINUED.]

"SURELY Vance must see things in this light," Cristine thought, as she arrayed herself with considerable trepidation for the coming interview with her brother—for Vance, having been duly apprised of their whereabouts, had promised to call early in the day.

"At least we shall not meet in Benjuda's presence," Miss Singleton thought, with a nervous laugh, when, a little before noon, she heard her brother's clear voice in the hall, and a few seconds later her mother's glad welcoming cry.

"I will leave them a few moments together; it is but fair," she said, as she closed her bed-room door and walked back to the tall pier-glass that reflected a face so drawn and haggard that she could hardly believe it her own. She bit her lips till they nearly bled and forced them to the ghastly parody of a smile, hating herself for the fear she showed. "It is conscience, I suppose—it cannot be that I am afraid of Vance—and yet, if my heart would only cease this sickening throbbing, I could go down and know the best and—the worst!"

But her heart beat all the more wildly, her throat and mouth grew parched, and, though Vance stayed more than an hour with his mother, it was not until she heard the door open and their voices echoing in the hall that she found resolution to descend the stairs and stand in her brother's presence.

She looked like a ghost, as she stood white and trembling, unable to articulate a word, but raising eyes of hopeless entreaty to his.

Even Vance, stern as his resentment was, and just as he thought it to be, was a little moved and softened; he had intended to raise his hat, as to a stranger, and pass on.

Now, to his mother's astonished—"Why, Vance, it is Cristine!" he answered with cold gentleness, "How do you do, Cristine!"—and just touched her hand with fingers at which she caught with a passionately grateful clutch.

It was the strangest meeting between brother and sister; but Cristine felt it was something gained; and, as the tall handsome young man passed out into the sunlit street, she drew a long breath of relief.

"What are you sighing about?" Mrs. Bruce asked almost indignantly, as she led the way back into the sitting room and plumped contentedly down into the nearest seat. "If there was a happy day, this is one."

Cristine did not answer—hardly listened indeed—a fact which her mother was too brimful of delightful excitement to resent, or even notice.

"Fancy, Cristine! Vance is married, and making so much money, and, as Benjuda says, on the way to be a great man; and he has one sweet little girl called 'Nora,' and the best wife in the world."

But the fashion in which her mother's news was delivered was a little too much for Cristine. With one item tumbling over another, and all mixed pell-mell, she could only gather that Vance was married—in itself a startling and significant fact that might naturally influence his attitude towards her.

"Try to tell me the story coherently, mother," she said more patiently than she usually spoke; "remember I know nothing yet, and am eager to know all."

Her attention was now vividly awake.

She drew her chair a little nearer, and listened with eager interest to the story Mrs. Bruce had to tell.

It was briefly the story of Vance's wooing and wedding, and his rapid professional success, which with a perfect belief in the truth of his words, he ascribed wholly and solely to his wife.

"But for her I should have been a penniless vagabond to-day, mother," he had said proudly. "I am a vagabond still, of course, but a vagabond with a balance at my bankers', and a very respectable visiting-list—which is a vagabond with a difference, as you know."

"I told him I did know," Mrs. Bruce finished, turning with perfect seriousness to her daughter. "I said Baron Benjuda—he knows all about the Baron, Crissie—told us that the world had quite changed its opinion since I was a girl, and actors were people of consideration now. He laughed, said the Baron was quite right, and again that he owed all this consideration to his wife."

"And when are we to see this paragon of perfection?" Cristine asked, unable to repress the habitual sneer, though she was honestly anxious for the answer.

Mrs. Bruce's face clouded a little.

"Well not just at present; the baby is not four weeks old, and he does not think Nettie—that is, his wife—could bear the excitement yet."

Cristine Singleton pondered in some perplexity the words that were a mere disappointment, not to be questioned or examined, to her mother. Her acute intellect saw something strange in a prohibition that left the reconciliation incomplete, and she vainly sought to affix a reason to it.

There could hardly be danger to the most nervous patient in the visit of avowedly friendly persons, and Vance must have seen that Mrs. Bruce was prepared to receive her new daughter-in-law with something approaching rapture.

Was it designed to keep her at a distance, or was Vance's home-life not so altogether charming as he wished them to believe?

"Did he give you his address?" she asked abruptly; and Mrs. Bruce shook her head.

"No, my dear; I forgot to ask him for it. He said the first day Nettie could come out he would bring her here."

But it was hardly Nettie; her brother's conduct was surely prompted by some other motive than care for her, his delicate wife. In her restless suspicious frame of mind Cristine felt that she should know no peace until she had solved the mystery.

Long before conjecture had had time to exhaust itself on the subject, Baron Benjuda, more radiant, imposing looking, and masterful than ever in his new character of accepted lover, had made his appearance and claimed all her attention and all her care.

He was so large and important a personage, it seemed only natural to allow him a clear stage in one's thoughts, and even Mrs. Bruce allowed Vance to be forgotten while this comfortable wooer discoursed in his rich sonorous tones of love and money.

He was the most solidly satisfactory of lovers, if to a more sentimental fancy he might have been held to fall something short of ideal perfection.

A few brief questions as to Cristine's position and prospects, which a shrewd guess at the Baron's character led Mrs. Bruce to answer with wise frankness, and then he turned to the more agreeable side of the subject, and, lolling back very much at his ease in the big chair he had placed between them, spoke of what he meant to do for the wife and mother-in-law, who in future must learn to look wholly at him.

It was like a dream of Pactolus to the two women who had known the cruel pinch and grind of genteel pretentious poverty so long.

They listened with eager eyes and lips apart while the full rich voice flowed evenly on in talk of settlements and pin-money and banking-accounts for present need.

Lord de Gretten was a rich man, and had seemed to their then views lavishly liberal; but there was a touch of Eastern magnificence about the Baron's ideas which threw those of the dead man completely into the shade.

"You are too generous, Baron," Mrs. Bruce cried at last, tears of real gratitude rising in her eyes, a touch of true feeling making her utterance husky and indistinct; while Cristine sat with clasped hands and down-bent head, wildly wondering if this were to be her punishment—if the gates of Paradise were to swing back before her, only to close inexorably in her face—if all the fairy-gold rained down in this glittering shower would change within her grasp to withered leaves.

"Tut, tut, my dear madam," the Baron said, with sovereign graciousness, well pleased alike with himself and her—in truth, the sense of royal condescension on his part was more delightful to him than any great alliance would have been—"the thanks are due from me. It is my privilege to give your pearl a splendid setting."

The "pearl" thus apostrophized did her best to smile in grateful acceptance of the compliment, but the effort was hardly successful.

"Cristine must thank you," Mrs. Bruce murmured as she withdrew, thinking at the same time that she could have performed the duty much better than her daughter, who in this the moment of her triumph had grown strangely listless, spiritless and dull.

She looked up as the door closed, and saw Benujda holding a diamond snake ring ready to slip upon her finger.

Somehow the sight brought back that other ring that had been the seal of Nora Bruce's betrothal, the fiery serpent that had goaded that unhappy girl to madness and death, and worse than death.

Did this hold such a sting for her, a just retributive sting? She withdrew her hand, with a sharp impulsive cry, and a shudder that ran through her whole frame.

The Baron drew back with a very displeased look; he was slow to take offence, slow to believe that any one could mean to offend him; but her movement had been unmistakable—he must needs resent it.

Before he could put his anger into words however, she caught his hands, and looking into his eyes, said, with a quick hysteric sob—

"You are too good to me—a real King Cophetua; and I, a true beggar-maid have nothing to offer in return."

The ring slipped on easily after that, and the white hand on which it glittered was raised with gallant grace to the Baron's lips.

This was the homage that he liked best; the *role of* King Cophetua exactly suited him, he thought.

Cophetua was surely the wisest of kings, a true epicure of feeling.

"Nothing to offer!" he said graciously, with a lordly mocking smile. "Only the best gifts of Cophetua's queen, her love and innocence and beauty!"

The compliment was prettily turned, or so he flattered himself, but Cristine did not smile as though it had banished her last modest fear.

On the contrary, she looked, with a sort of wistful entreaty altogether out of keeping with her character as he knew it, and held one hand, as though she feared to release it.

"What is it, my lily queen?" he asked, half puzzled by the strangeness of her mood, half flattered by the thought that he had inspired a real affection where he had intended to make a splendid purchase.

"If—if anything should come between us now!" she said, with such a look of such genuine terror as filled the Baron with supreme delight.

"Nothing shall."

He threw one arm round her slim waist and drew her to him, till the fair head rested upon his broad shoulder. "You are mine now, Cristine; and I should like to see the man who would try to take what I call mine from me!"

The cheerful confidence of the strong unsentimental voice was like a tonic draught to Cristine.

Why should she worry herself any more? Her past was past; it should not overshadow her future.

She raised her head; and disengaging herself with a pretty laugh, she gracefully glided from the subject.

"Vance was here this morning," she said, leaning back against the tall velvet-backed chair, well aware that her lover was noting the effective contrast it presented to the pale gold of her hair, the clear whiteness of her skin. "Vance was here; and he is married."

"As I could have told you," Benjuda said tranquilly. "I remember Miss Clare last year, a bright pretty creature, full of talent and grace."

"But an actress," Miss Singleton said deprecatingly.

"My connections will do you no great credit, I fear."

The Baron laughed with easy and magnificent scorn.

Cristine still needed a lesson, he thought.

"My dear child, what can such things matter to me?

"As it happens, I shall consider myself most happy in the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Vance Singleton, who are very charming people; but, were one half of your relatives hanged for murder, and the rest transported for swindling, it would alter my intentions no whit, were you all I thought you still.

"When you individually are guilty of an act that you need blush for, then I will give you up—but not till then. Do you agree to that, Cristine?"

"Yes," said Cristine faintly—and her blood ran cold with fear.

"And when are you to see the new sister-in-law?"

"Oh"—Cristine looked up, inspired with a new idea—"mother and I intended to pay her a surprise visit; but Vance is so stupid he never left his address."

"Well, I can get you that," Benjuda said, smiling.

"Without asking him directly? For we want to surprise them both."

"Certainly; I can get it at the theatre."

"Oh, if you will!" Cristine said, with a delighted look, from which the Baron drew the pleasant but erroneous conviction that she really cared for her brother, and was indeed more generally soft-hearted and affectionate than he had thought.

"By-the-way, Cristine," he said, as, after a sufficiently lengthy stay, he rose to go, "I should have told you that Lady Olivia Blake intends to call."

"Lady Olivia Blake!"

"Yes; I asked it as a personal favor, and being an old friend of mine, she did not like to refuse, though of course, in the circumstances, the visit will be rather painful to her."

"Of course," said Cristine, constraining herself to speak as indifferently as he did, though she wondered, in an inner agony, whether Lady Olivia had filled in the very meagre sketch she had given of her step-sister's tragic ending.

Benjuda tapped the pale cheek in a fondly patronising fashion.

"Do not look so scared, lily. She will not harrow your feelings with any allusions to the murder.

"She was too fond of that wretched scamp of a De Gretton, I think. At least, she seems never to have recovered from the shock of his death."

"I do not wonder," Cristine said, with a truthful shudder, and yet with a fear-sharpened quickness to take shelter behind his own words. "I cannot bear to think of that time."

"And you shall not, lily," he cried, with a parting kiss; "henceforth you shall think only of me."

Cristine smiled till he was out of sight.

The smile faded in the old look of fear; to her conscience-stricken thoughts it seemed that all who knew or had guessed at her old treachery were rising up to bear witness against her now.

CHAPTER XX.

"COULD you tell me all that you remember of that night, Nora? It is for your own sake I ask it—no, for mine"—as the girl drew back into the shadow, hiding her face with both white hands—"I will not let you live this life in death any longer.

"All the world shall know, as I know, that you are innocent!"

Arthur Beaupre spoke with vehement passion.

His handsome face was flushed and eager, his blue eyes were dark and dilated.

He looked strangely unlike the listless world-weary invalid of a few days back.

The two were alone together in Mrs. Vance Singleton's pretty sitting-room, alone with their own memories for company.

The evening shadows were falling softly around them, the stars were peeping here and there in the faint gray sky to which Nora's dark eyes turned with a wistful persistency, though her thoughts were centred on things personal.

"What would you have me to do?" she said, without turning her head, and speaking with a grave pathos that went to the young man's heart.

"The world believed me guilty, and believes me dead. Would you have me give myself up to justice?"

"No, no!"

Arthur grew white with horror at the picture her words called up.

"But you are not guilty. My darling, you are a martyr, not a criminal!"

The favor of his tone brought a faint rose-tint to the pale cheek and a grateful light to the dark eyes; but Nora said gently—

"You take my word for that, Arthur; I have no other evidence to offer—and the world——"

"Oh, the world!"

Arthur rose and paced the room with rapid irregular steps, then paused, leaning both arms on the back of a tall chair, and looking down at silent Nora with all his loving aching heart in his blue eyes.

"Nora, the world was crueller than I—than Vance—than those who loved you most dearly.

"We thought you dead, and, reading in that death the confession of a crime, never paused to sift the evidence that may bear less hardly upon you than you think. Your disappearance gave perfect immunity to the real criminal—remember that."

Still Nora did not answer.

He saw that she was listening with earnest attention, and went on eagerly—

"I swear to prove your innocence, to find the real criminal!

"Nora, for our love's sake, do not refuse to help me!

"Think, my dearest—try to recall every incident of that night."

"I will"—the clear voice vibrated with a new earnest emotion, with something that sounded almost like the ring of hope, though the gray eyes darkened pathetically and the slight hands were nervously

clasped—"I will try; but, Arthur, you must give me time.

"I was mad, mad with fear and misery that night, and all my recollections are confused and dim."

"Take time, my darling."

The poor young fellow's own heart throbbed with suffocating quickness, his blood coursed madly through his veins, his brain grew dizzy with its thronging hopes and fears.

Yet, by a giant effort, he forced himself to speak with something like reassuring calm.

Everything now depended upon her clearness of memory, upon faculties that had been obscured so cruelly and so long.

The length of time that had passed, the opportunities that had been let slip, the easy fashion in which inquiry into the crime had been allowed to degenerate into a search for the lost bride—all these things had rendered search for the real criminal almost hopeless, unless she, who alone knew the real story, could help him with some clue.

"Take time, Nora; little by little it will all come back, and then——"

He could not finish the sentence, could only steady his trembling hands upon the tall chair-back and watch the young face, with its strange frame of silver hair, as though life and death hung—as indeed they did—upon the utterance of those pale perfect lips.

"He—Lord de Gretton—did not speak until we reached the cottage," Nora said, in a low frightened voice, as though the sound of her own words alarmed her; "and then, I cannot tell you it was dreadful—it seemed as though some demon took possession of him.

"He pushed me into a chair, and stood over me, with his eyes—he had such strange eyes, Arthur!—sunk far back in his head, but very bright; and now they blazed as though a fire burned beneath his heavy lids.

"Oh, I see them so often in my dreams—I can see them now!"

She paused, with a strong shudder and a look of deadly terror.

But the entreaty of Arthur's face was more potent even than the old haunting fear.

Conquering the tremor, she went on bravely—

"He told me that I had deceived and trapped him—I, who would have died far more gladly than marry him—that I was a false wife—a woman he could never trust again.

"At first I tried to answer him; but he would not hear me.

"He cut my explanation short with that bitter little laugh of his, and went on and on, in a cold, smooth, merciless voice, saying the cruellest things in the quietest fashion, till at last I really ceased to understand him.

"His words seemed to bruise and hurt my brain like so many blows, but not to convey to it any coherent idea.

"I suppose he saw this, for he suddenly bent forward, seized me by the shoulder, and shook me, bringing his face so close to mine that I could not keep back a startled cry.

"'You are hysterical, my lady, worn out and exhausted by the fatigues and excitements of the day,' he said, with grim horrible mockery.

"'Your maid shall show you to your room.

"'In your present state of excitement you had better keep in for the remainder of the evening.'

"'I understand; I am a prisoner,' I said slowly.

"'By no means,' he answered, with an angry snarl. 'We will not shock the servants with a key; you are indisposed—a fitting subject for strong tea and sal-volatile, as your maid will readily believe. You are by no means a prisoner—only understand'—his hand closed again in a cruel grip upon my shoulder, and again my heart died within me in a chill and deadly fear—'only understand that I shall be on guard the whole evening in this room.

"'So, if you have a fancy for any more stolen meetings with your lover——'

"In spite of the craven fear that paralysed me, Arthur, I broke in then; the insult was too cruel, the wrong too great for even cowardice to bear.

"'I met Mr. Beaupre by accident, and we have parted for ever,' I began; but he cut me savagely short.

"'That is my business—I will see to that,' he said, in a low grating voice that was in itself a threat.

"'With both of you I have a long account to settle; but not now—not now.'

"Arthur, to this day I cannot tell what impulse moved me in that moment to do the last thing I should have thought of doing a second or so before. Until then I had hated him as a slave hates a hard and cruel master to whom he is hopelessly consigned.

"His look had never been more threatening, his words more cruel—and yet all in a moment a flood of light seemed to rush upon me.

"I saw things by its clear lustre no longer from my point of view, but from his—saw that he had wrong to complain of and disappointment to endure, that, where he trusted, he had—though, Heaven knows, most innocently—been deceived. The impulse was like a revelation; I obeyed it as unhesitatingly.

"'Lord de Gretton,' I said humbly, 'try to believe me, try to forgive.'

"But he snatched away his hand as though my fingers burned him, his eyes shone with their evil glitter, and his voice literally trembled with passion, as he said between his teeth—

"'Never, so long as we may live! I never trust a traitress; and, if you wish to know how I forgive the women who have wronged me, ask Lady Olivia Blake.'

"They were the last words he ever spoke to me, Arthur. No wonder that they linger in my mind.

"I hardly understood them then: but afterwards, when all things were confused and misty in my thoughts, those words rang in my ears incessantly."

She paused again, her hands tightly locked, her eyes gazing into the deepening shadows of the night with a strained and painful intensity.

Arthur did not dare to speak, to hasten in any way the disclosure that was so slow to come.

"The hours seemed long, horribly long, Arthur—and yet I must have passed them in a sort of trance.

"Long after my maid had left me for the night I sat by the open window, thinking, thinking in a maze of misery, till I fell into a dull heavy sleep—a sleep that left me no consciousness of present surroundings—only an abiding sense of pain and fear. And, while I slept, Arthur, I dreamed a dream—such a strangely vivid, dreadful dream that I woke from it trembling from head to foot, and with great drops of perspiration on my forehead.

"I thought that, while Lord de Gretton sat writing in the room below, with his heart full of bitterness and anger, a shadow came nearer and nearer; and I know that it came to do him harm.

"I saw its outline clearly in the moonlight, tall, black, and slender, a graceful woman's shape.

"The face was hidden; but I caught the glitter of fierce eyes, and in the small white hand another glitter that made my heart stand still.

"I tried to scream, to warn the man, who never raised his head, of the dreadful thing that drew nearer every moment; but horror had paralysed my every faculty.

"I could not stir or cry. I heard a sharp cry of pain, a clear and cruel laugh, the sound of taunting voices, and a heavy fall.

"Then the spell that held me seemed suddenly to snap, and in an agony of terror I—awoke!

"So it had been but a dream after all! I was still in the velvet chair by the open window.

"Stillness perfect and intense reigned around.

"Far up in the clear blue of the heavens the moon shone with full brightness, making each nook and corner of the garden distinctly visible; from terrace to terrace the lovely light passed down, till it reached and lingered on the placid splendor of the sea—and, look where I would, no flying figure was in sight.

"It was a dream, thank Heaven—a dream only!

"I sank back in my chair, ashamed to find how intense was my feeling of relief, how strong a hold the vanished vision had had upon me.

"It was long before I could control the wild throbbing of my heart, or regain anything like composure; but it came at last; and, worn out and exhausted, I once more dozed off, to be once more roused by a long moan of pain.

"This time however the sound did not cease with my slumber, as I sat, cold and shaking, in the chill gray morning light. I heard it again, and yet again—a sound to freeze the blood in your veins, a sound like the moan of a wounded animal too weak to cry aloud.

"Almost mechanically, conscious in an unconscious way that piteous sound had reached no ear but mine, I rose to my feet, and, obeying some impulse beyond my own control, descended the stairs and entered the little room in which Lord de Gretton had told me he should be 'on guard.' I found——Oh, Arthur, is it any wonder that the sight I looked on drove me mad?"

She broke down in a passion of hysterical tears.

Arthur let her cry, restraining his impatience by a giant effort for her sake.

In such tears lay the best medicine for the overwrought nerves and overtaxed brain.

He held one hand within his own strong clasp, in firm assurance of his sympathy; but it was not till the sobs had died away, and the girl tried to smile gratefully through her tears, that he spoke at all—then he said gently—

"Do not dwell on details that distress you but finish the story, like my own brave girl. You found Lord de Gretton—dead?"

"Not dead, but dying," she said, in a low shaken voice. "He still lived when I knelt beside him, but that was all. The blood ran like a river round him; it was on my dress, my hands—everywhere; and his face was white—oh, so horribly white! I should have thought him dead but for the dreadful glitter of his eyes and that broken cry—it was faint as the faintest whisper.

"Then I tried to raise his head, to cry aloud; but my voice failed, and he motioned me back.

"He tried to move, to speak, failed, and closed his eyes—tried again, and, by a supreme effort, jerked out one word—the word that had been the haunting key-note of my dream—'Olivia;' and so, with a brief convulsive struggle, he died."

"And you?" Arthur Beaupre asked, in tones of infinite compassion, as he laid his hand upon the down-bent head, and thanked Heaven in his inmost heart that even this ray of light, faint and uncertain as it was, had pierced the darkness of the night and given promise of the dawn at hand.

"I," the sweet voice was sharpened by pain, the sweet uplifted eyes were filled with self-reproachful light, "I was not brave, Arthur; I was not what you called me.

"I dropped like a dead thing by Lord de Gretton's side, and, when I awoke, it was broad day.

"It was too late to summon help, too late for anything.

"I think I went mad in that moment, Arthur! The sight of the rigid motionless figure, of the blood that lay around me, that stiffened on my dress, my hands, my feet, the hopelessness of my own future, a craven fear of the life that seemed so incomprehensibly cruel—all seemed to stir me to a sudden frenzy, and bid me take my fate in my own hands.

"I forgot all things—conscience, religion, duty—all but the sweet and easy death that awaited me there, at the cliff's foot; and, like a thing possessed, I rushed to meet it.

"You know the rest," she said, with a little strained sob.

"Heaven sent my better angel, Nettie, to my rescue; and for all the months that followed I remember little more—nothing but the absolute devotion with which Vance and she have watched and tended and sacrificed themselves to me—me, whom they thought a murderess!"

The shadows had gathered unnoticed round the young pair as they sat absorbed in their own conversation.

The faint moonlight and the uncertain glimmer of the lamp across the street lighted the room now.

Arthur stood by the window, looking out abstractedly, his whole thought engrossed by the story he had heard.

Suddenly he turned to Nora, who, lost in a painful reverie, sat by the table, and spoke quickly, with a nervous jar in his voice:

"Nora dearest, go away for a little while to your own room. A lady has just come into the house, and I think—I fear—— Go, dearest, to please me!"

A little surprised, but unquestioningly obedient, Nora rose at once and moved towards the door.

It opened in her face, and disclosed Cristine Singleton.

Nora recognized her step-sister at once.

Cristine, whose veil of spotted net confused her vision, and whose eyes were not trained to the dusk, naturally concluded that the slender form was that of Mrs. Vance Singleton.

"My dear sister," she cried, with outstretched hand and her most fascinating smile, "I have come, in spite of Vance's prohibition, to make acquaintance with Vance's wife.

"I know we shall love each other very dearly."

She bent her fair head with the words, prepared to imprint the kiss that is the absolutely necessary seal of friendship feminine.

Nora drew her aside instinctively.

The one clear line of light fell straight across the fair proud face, defining it with startling effect against the blackness of the surrounding shadows.

Cristine grew absolutely livid.

A cry rose to her lips, but it found no utterance.

Recognition was instantaneous, and as instantaneous was the paralysing terror that seemed turning her to stone.

"Nora," she cried at last, in a hoarse broken voice—"Nora—or—or——"

She paused, trembling from head to foot, oppressed with the horror of a supernatural presence.

As Nora neither moved nor spoke, she fell suddenly upon her knees, uprising both hands, with an exceedingly bitter cry—

"Forgive me, Nora, cruel as I was!"

"Hush!" Nora said, with a grave sweetness that seemed half angelic to the conscience-stricken woman and the listening man.

"It is for me to fear you now, Cristine: I am not dead, and you can give me up to Justice with a word."

* * * * * *

Lady Olivia Blake sat in the tiny luxuriously-furnished nest she called her own snuggery, awaiting with some impatience the arrival of an expected guest.

It was barely twilight—a rosy glow still lingered in the western sky.

Her ladyship's curtains were all drawn, and, the light of a dozen wax-candles not being considered enough to illuminate the small room, a large moderator lamp upon a centre-table diffused a bright radiance around.

Light was a craze with Lady Olivia; the sun could never blaze too fully into every corner of her house.

When the sun retired, she could not supply his place with too many lights.

Naturally her elder feminine friends wondered among themselves that "dear Olivia, with whom complexion was never a strong point," and who, since her disappointment, had grown quite too dreadfully pinched and thin and sallow, should care to throw such a strong revealing light upon her failing charms; and one especially intimate individual, who felt that such an absurd illumination was wrong to her elaborate "make-up," ventured to remonstrate with her on the subject.

"I love the dark because my deeds are evil perhaps," she said, with a deprecating smile; "but, though your conscience may be clear, my dear Olivia, you should have some mercy on your visitors' complexions."

"The sun that comes here will not scorch them," was the short and barely courteous answer.

"Scorch them! No; but"—with a little shoulder-shrug and prettily affected laugh—"though you disdain them, there are secrets of the toilette, you know."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

RUST.—A German inventor has patented a preparation for protecting iron from rusting. It consists of ordinary oil paint mixed with ten per cent. of burned magnesia, baryta or strontia, and mineral oil.

FILES.—A greasy file is instantly cleansed by holding it a moment in a steam jet. This is a ready and effective "grease cure" for machinists and other mechanics working where steam is handy; simple as it is, it is not much known as such.

SPONGES.—To clean and whiten old and discolored sponges, first well wash them in soap and water, then well rinse them so as to be quite free from soap; then soak them in a solution of permanganate of potash for three minutes; then well wash in cold water and put them into some strong oxalic acid, when the sponge will become a beautiful bright yellow.

NEW CAR.—A new parlor and sleeping car has no aisle running through the centre. Instead there is a corridor at the side, into which the doors of the various compartments open. The sofas with which the compartments are furnished are at night transformed into beds. The beds are made up with the head next the corridor partition, "bringing the vital parts of the body in the middle of the car, a safer position than along the sides of the windows." The beds are longer than those of other cars.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING.—The endless diversity of uses to which electricity may be received another illustration recently at the Court Opera at Vienna, where, by the simple expedient of suspending tiny incandescent lamps by fine swinging wires, the effect was produced of swarms of fireflies flitting about a tropical forest. By switches the current is turned off and on at the pleasure of the operator. And the effect, as the artificial fireflies flash and dance in mid-air, is said to have been electrical in other than a literal sense.

WOOD IN SURGERY.—Wood is being employed scientifically in surgery in a different form from ordinary splints. A foreigner has introduced wood-wool as a cheap and useful dressing for wounds; and it is being prepared extensively as a commercial staple for surgical dressings. It is finely ground wood, as is extensively used in the manufacture of paper. It is a clean-looking, delicate-fibered, soft, yellowish-white substance, having an odor of fresh wood, and absorbs an immense quantity of liquid. The best wood-wool was found to be that which was obtained from pitch pine.

Farm and Garden.

DIPHTHERIA.—Horses are subject to diphtheria, and the use of chlorate of potash is good in such cases, giving two drachms, in solution, at a dose.

FOR FLOWERS.—Use very fine soil only for potted plants, although clean, coarse, lumpy soil, which allows the surplus water to flow away easily, as well as admitting air to the roots, is also excellent.

PLANT AND WEED.—This year when you are putting in your seed remember when two plants of the same kind are growing together one is a weed. The most dangerous enemy a plant can have is another of the same species growing by its side, for they both feed on the same food, and competition is the result.

ON RAINY DAYS.—If you will go to the barn some ugly day when you cannot well work out of doors, and make a trough for the eaves of your stable and carry away that drip which you usually allow to fall on your manure pile and leach through it, you will make ten times as much money on that rainy day as you usually can on a fine one.

FRUIT TREES.—Crotched or forked fruit trees of any kind can be kept from splitting down or twisting together one twig from each of the main branches. These twigs thus twisted together will in five years grow into a solid branch that cannot be broken. Twigs from the size of a lead pencil to half an inch in diameter can be used for this purpose.

DRAINING.—Draining is work that can be taken up or laid down and finished piecemeal, providing one goes the right way about it. And the right way is to begin at the outlet, making the drain as deep as the lay of the land allows, so as to secure a good fall. It may be finished in sections of fifty or a hundred feet, providing that care is taken to make the inlet safe, and that a record of levels and measurements is kept. In this way the work may be carried on as opportunity is given.

IN SICKNESS.—A sick horse that cannot be induced to lie down in any other way will often take to a bed of clean, bright straw. The farmer who desires to increase the size and quality of his manure pile should use plenty of bedding under his stock; besides the increase of fertilizers for his land he will add much to the comfort of his stock. Whether kept in a stable or in yards, it should be provided with a clean place to sleep in at night and in winter, with plenty of warm, clean bedding.

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HONORS AND CONDITION.

No matter how richly endowed the mind; no matter if the rough diamond of intellect be polished by academy and college until it shines as a very star; idleness will dull its lustre as sloth weakens the muscles, and in the end the active pebble will become of more value than the lazy gem. The ability to drink in all the dead and half the living languages; to swear through the gamut from ancient Hebrew to modern Choctaw, has never yet made a man great, or even made him respected in the community.

On the contrary, the greater the advantages, the more brilliant the opportunities, neglected or discarded, the more worthless the estimation in which he is held by people whose good opinion is worth the winning.

On the other hand, the race being free for all, no social or other artificial restrictions forbidding entry, the track tending ever upward and onward, the young man who fails to contend for one of the prizes that awaits successful achievement, is criminal to his kind. Nothing stands still in the animate or inanimate creation. Even the rocks are slowly growing. Everything protests against it.

Inaction in man rusts the faculties, dwarfs the intellect, and destroys the moral nature; and he who sits in idleness and curses the ill-luck that does not permit him to prosper like his more active neighbor, simply profanes his better self. His neighbor has attained nothing he could not, with like exertion, have attained himself.

The truth is, loafing should be prohibited as a crime, and those too lazy to work of their own volition for the benefit of themselves or for the benefit of their families, should be put in some institution and be compelled to labor for the benefit of the State, the latter paying reasonable wages for their services to their families. The old German law requiring every youth, not even excepting the king's sons, to learn some useful occupation, would be an excellent law for this day and country.

It has long been an axiom that "an idle brain is the devil's workshop," and again, that "Satan still some mischief finds for idle hands to do." Industrious application is the true religion. Idleness is the sin of sins. No loafer can be a Christian. Wickedness of all kinds comes as natural to the idle man as honey-making to the bees. In the school of idleness thieves are taught to steal, and rogues to swindle. It is the force-bed for crime. It is the prolific parent of gamblers and drunkards. Its career is a career of vagabondage, and its end a pauper coffin. And when we realize the indisputable truth of these things, we often wonder why so many young men prefer such an ignoble existence when a glorious and inviting future spreads out like an inviting prospect before them.

SANCTUM CHAT.

It is said that nearly half of the patents applied for in recent years have been for car-couplers, and still for all that the bulk of car-coupling to-day is done with the primitive link and pin.

—

An Iowa man has figured out that the dogs of that State eat enough annually to feed one hundred thousand workmen, and cost $9,000,000, counting the sheep they kill. The education of the children of the State costs $4,000,000.

—

In a spirit of rivalry, two Indianapolis clothiers went to selling pants cheaply, so that one finally put his goods down to ten cents a pair, the other following to five, when both let them go at last—something like two thousand pairs in all—at one cent a pair.

—

The official returns show that the healthiest class of people in Great Britain are the inmates of prisons, where simple diet, regular hours, and exercise are compulsory. But the cases of insanity among the convicts are out of proportion to the number of other ailments. To commit a crime a man must be more or less insane.

—

In France it is proposed to punish by heavy fines and imprisonment for from one to five years, the person who imitates a signature or sign used by an artist, or puts the name of another artist to his own or other work of art. A bill has been framed to this effect. It gives the painter the same protection at law now enjoyed by manufacturers.

—

It is generally thought that there is nothing easier than to give good advice. It is so abundant and cheap, it is said, because it costs nothing. Now this may be applicable to much of the trite counsel and most of the well-worn maxims that live upon the lips, but do not come from the heart; it may be true concerning such exhortations as we have been in the habit of listening to from one generation and passing on to the next, without much reference to their applicability; but it is not true of anything which honestly bears the name of good advice. That is not plentiful or easy to give.

—

A machine called a "horse bicycle" has recently been invented in Germany. It consists of two large wheels with a number of smaller wheels arranged inside, so as to increase the speed of the large wheels, and thus push along, so to speak, the horse who is attached in front. It is claimed that by this invention the ordinary speed of a horse can be nearly doubled without incessant exertion on the part of the horse.

—

In North Wales an organized agitation has commenced, with a view to the formation of a Land League somewhat on the lines of the association which has caused such an upheaval in the sister isle. One of the supporters of the movement says that "rack-rent is a terrible evil in Wales; more so," he believes, "than any other part of the kingdom." The same person states that the Welsh farmers are quite ripe for the agitation, as the majority of them are groaning under burdens by far too heavy for them to bear.

—

A French physician has tried to discover the psychological influence of trades, and finds that persons dealing in sweets, like candy, have a slightly morose disposition, which gives women the air of conceit; paper dealers and booksellers are supposed to be uncommunicative and rather courteous; glove dealers are represented to be specially gentle and patient, and all leather goods are said to have naturally a pacifying influence; silks and dry goods in general are represented to cause monotonous forbearance, and opticians are supposed to have unusual equanimity.

—

Apropos of the announcement that Westminster Abbey is overcrowded and cannot serve as the last resting place of many more great men, a writer in a prominent London paper suggests a novel means of saving, for a time at least, the as yet vacant portions of the hallowed precincts for the living. He suggests that no more poets or statesmen should have memorials in the Abbey till they should have stood the test of time—say, a hundred years of immortality. If, at the end of that period, their fame and popularity are still undiminished, then—but not till then—let them have the memorial.

—

Some years ago, says a Boston chemical journal, a sensation was created by some one undertaking to make sugar from old shirts. Sugar is now manufactured in Germany from old rags. The rags are treated with sulphuric acid and converted into dextrine. This is treated with a milk of lime and is then subjected to a new bath of sulphuric acid, which converts it into glucose. The glucose obtained by this process is identical with that of commerce, and may be used in the same way for confections, ices, etc. When the manufacture has become more abundant the price will doubtless be very small. It is known that a great number of substances are capable of transformation into glucose. The cellulose of fibrous tissues of wood, treated with sulphuric acid, is changed into dextrine and glucose, and glucose is industrially produced from starch.

—

According to a leading medical journal, asparagus is a strong diuretic, and forms part of the cure for rheumatism at such health resorts as Aix-les-Bains. Sorrel is cooling. Carrots, as containing a quantity of sugar, are avoided by some persons, while others complain of them as indigestible; in Savoy the peasants have recourse to an infusion of carrots as a specific for jaundice. The large sweet onion is very rich in those alkaline elements which counteract the poison of rheumatic gout, and on being slowly stewed in weak broth and eaten with a little Nepaul pepper it proves an admirable article of diet for patients of studious and sedentary habits. The stalks of cauliflower have the same sort of value. Lettuce is also to be mentioned in this connection; the plant has a slight narcotic action of well-known value, and when properly cooked is easy of digestion.

—

Prof. Sargent, of Hartford College, in lecturing the other evening in Boston on exercise, drew an important distinction between easy and brisk walking. He held that, for a person troubled with insomnia, nervous diseases and particular kinds of heart troubles, the exercise obtained from a number of moderate walks, taken at intervals during the day, is the best thing that can be found. Rapid walking or any other violent exercises, serve rather to aggravate than cure troubles of this nature. But for a man in the enjoyment of good health these saunters are wholly useless. What he needs is a sharp, brisk walk, which will start the circulation of the blood and bring all the muscles of the body into play. Walks of this kind are decidedly beneficial, and heartily recommended. The most rapid walker is he who walks from the thighs rather than from the knees.

—

A technical journal, on car-building, says: "We do not expect to see either passenger or freight cars built entirely of metal. In this climate there are many serious objections to metalic siding, but paper compounds, or paper in some of its forms, will doubtless be used instead, although for many years wood, from its cheapness, will hold its own against any other substances. We do not apprehend that there will be any considerable difficulty in using substitutes for wood in covering cars, but so long as the wood is the cheapest and is sufficiently strong and durable to answer the purpose, we must content ourselves with speculation in regard to the future. When strawboard can be obtained at anything like the price of wood, the siding of passenger cars at least will be much better made of paper than of wood. The size of the sheets, which are easily obtainable, and the firmness with which they can be fastened to the posts, are some of the great advantages in its favor. We suppose, from what we have heard in regard to strawboard and straw lumber, that in time a single panel, extending from the door, around the corner and to the centre of the car, and reaching from window-sills to the bottom, can be used to good advantage. Such a construction would, of course, greatly increase the strength of the car, and would present several other material advantages."

—

A man never knows what he is capable of until he has tried his powers. There seems to be no bounds to human capacity. Insight, energy, and will, produce astonishing results. How often modest talent, driven by circumstances to undertake some formidable-looking work, has left its own untried, and hitherto unconscious powers, rise up to grapple and master, and afterward stood amazed at his own unprecedented success! Those circumstances, those people, enemies, friends, that provoke us to any noble or manly undertaking, are our greatest benefactors. Opposition and persecution do more for a man than any seemingly-good fortune. The sneers of critics develop the latent fire in the young poet. Here is a truth worth considering. Are you in poverty? have you suffered wrong? do circumstances oppose you? are you beset by enemies? Now is your time! Never lie there, depressed and melancholy! Spend no more days in idling. Up, like a lion! Make no complaint, but if difficulty fights you, roar your defiance. You know not what is in you. You are at school, this is your necessary discipline, poverty and pain are your masters—but use the powers God has given you, and you shall be master at last. Fear of failure is the most fruitful cause of failure. Stand firm upon the rock "not fail." What seems a failure at first, is discipline. Accept the lesson, and trust the grand result! Up and up again; strike and strike again, and you shall always gain, whatever the fortune of to-day or to-morrow's battle.

GIVE THEM NOW.

If I should lie before you, still and white,
In death's unbroken sleep,
Wrapt in the holy stillness of the night
Wherein no care can creep,
Would you not shower upon my poor dead face
Sweet kisses that I crave?
Give without stint fond words and warm embrace
To take into my grave?

O, give them ere I pass beyond the reach
Of loving smile and word!
For it may be your gift of kindly speech
Will be too long deferred;
One little act—though trivial it may seem—
Tendered for love's sweet sake—
Would bring my troubled life one golden gleam,
And soothe its weary ache.

One tender smile—such as you used to give
In other, happier days
(When, darling, it was oh, so sweet to live!)
Would light earth's darkest ways.
One heart-felt kiss—that I have missed so long—
With its glad, old-time thrills;
One—only one—I think would make me strong
To bear all earthly ills.

The path appointed for a woman's feet,
At best, is hard and rough;
To know that we are loved is passing sweet;
But oh! 'tis not enough!
My heart would famish with the meager dole
That you so oft bestow;
I know you love me dear, with heart and soul!
But, darling, tell me so!

Am I less dear than when you loved me first?
Less worthy of your praise?
My craving heart is hungry and athirst
For love's endearing ways.
O, give them ere I pass beyond the reach
Of loving smile and word!
For it may be your gift of kindly speech
Will be too long deferred.

Learning His Character.

BY BLAKE PAXSON.

MR. WILKINSON sat alone with a dainty little perfumed note between his fingers, and a puzzled frown between his eyes.

The note was brief—

"DEAR GUARDIAN,—I will be at the office at ten in the morning to consult you upon a matter of great importance.

"MARGARET."

"A matter of importance!" muttered Mr. Wilkinson, twisting the note nervously. "Can my fears be true? Has Cyril Ormsby proposed to my pearl? I am afraid he has. And what can I say? What can I urge against the man, if Margaret's own instincts have played her false?"

The door of the office was opened, and Margaret Bentley entered the room.

She was of medium height, slender and graceful, with a thoughtful face of exquisite beauty.

Her soft, pearly complexion was rarely tinged with color, yet had no sickly pallor, and her eyes, large and dark, were gentle in expression, more often sad than merry.

Very young, only eighteen, Margaret Bentley had borne early the sorrows of life.

Her father having been wealthy, had failed in business, and committed suicide.

Her mother, delicate and helpless, had fought poverty for two years, and sinking under privation and toil, had contracted a fatal disease.

When all hope of life was over, the news came that Margaret's uncle, dying abroad, had left a large fortune to his only sister.

A will was made by the dying woman, leaving her too-lately won independance to Margaret and appointing their friend Wilkinson, guardian to the heiress.

She had been an orphan two years on the day when she came to see Mr. Wilkinson, as already described, and the sorrows of her life had lost some of their bitter sting, leaving only a gentle sadness upon her sweet, pure face.

"Well, Margaret," the old gentleman said, "what brings to me the pleasure of seeing you to-day? An important matter."

But the kindly eyes detected signs of trouble in the sweet face, and the jesting voice was turned at once to one of tender gravity.

"What is it, my child?"

"Cyril Ormsby came to see me last evening, and he will come here to-day, but I wanted to see you first. He wants me to be his wife, and——" she hesitated here, "you do not like him?"

"Who told you that?"

"No one, but I see it for myself."

"Well, you are right, I do not like him. But my like or dislike has no control over you."

"No control!" Margaret's voice was piteous. "Please don't talk so. I come to you as I would have gone to my father!"

"There, I was wrong. Tell me, then, as you would have told my father, do you love Mr. Ormsby?"

"I think he is the noblest man I ever know. If you could see how gentle and courteous he is, you would like him, too. He has given me so much sympathy."

"And so won your love?"

"My respect and admiration, uncle. I cannot yet realize that a man so noble and so good can really desire my companionship and help in his life. But since he does, I am glad and proud to have won his confidence."

"Enthusiastic, but heart-whole!" was Mr. Wilkinson's mental comment. "Suppose you and I go for a walk," he added, aloud.

"A walk!" Margaret said, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes. I have a friend or two I should like to have you see. When we come back, I will tell you why I dislike Cyril Ormsby, if," he added, mentally, "you have not already found out."

It was not exactly such a walk as one would have mapped out for a gentleman's invitation to a young, beautiful girl, but Margaret followed its course, leaning upon her guardian's arm, certainly, wondering a little, but never hesitating.

Past the respectable portion of the city, to a quarter where Mr. Wilkinson had never before allowed his ward to go.

"For a noble philanthropist, partly owning these factories and this quarter, Mr. Ormsby seems neglectful," said Mr. Wilkinson, rather dryly.

"I have an interest in the factories, as you are aware, but do not own one of these wretched houses. They are all Cyril Ormsby's."

"But," Margaret said, eagerly, "these people will not let him benefit them. They use his charity for drink; they abuse any privilege he gives them, till he is discouraged in his efforts to do them any good."

"Oh, step in here."

It was a poor place, scantily furnished and cheerless.

Upon a bed a woman, in the last stages of consumption.

She raised her eyes eagerly to Mr. Wilkinson.

"I hope you are better," he said, kindly.

"No; I shall never be better. If I may only die in peace, it is all I ask."

"Mr. Ormsby will not disturb you now?"

"Jennie has gone to him. Yesterday he sent word that if the rent was not ready today at twelve, out we must go. I've paid it regularly for five years, but he don't think of that. All Jennie's made the last month she has had to pay for fire and food. She's but fifteen, and her pay is small."

"What do you owe Cyril Ormsby?"

"Thirty shillings."

"And if he is not paid to-day, he will put you out in the street to die?"

"He says the workhouse is the place for paupers."

At this moment a slim, pale girl of fifteen came in, crying bitterly.

"Mr. Wilkinson was out," she began.

And then seeing her visitors, she cried out, eagerly—

"Oh, Mr. Wilkinson, don't let mother be put into the street? I'll pay every penny, sir, if only he will wait till she is better and I can get my full time to work."

"Have you seen Mr. Ormsby to-day, Jennie?" the old gentleman asked.

"Yes, sir. He said he had no time to hear any whining. The agent will be here at twelve, and if the money is not paid, he will turn us out."

"May I?" whispered Margaret.

"Just as you please, my dear. Perhaps this dying woman or her child will drink up your charity."

"Hush, hush!"

So tenderly, so delicately Margaret gave her charity, that there was only deepest gratitude awakened, without the galling sense of obligation.

She left more than sufficient for comfort for some weeks, and promised to send delicacies for the invalid.

No word of herself passed her lips until they were once more in the narrow street.

Then she lifted her soft eyes, full of piteous pleading, to her guardian's face.

"Oh," she said, "can it be true that he is so hard?"

"Wait," was the brief reply.

They went into the wide court-yard in whose space stood the four great factories, the joint property of Wilkinson and Ormsby, long before divided by the entirely opposite management of these two into distinct departments, one entirely under the control of the elder, the other of the younger man.

"Wilkinson's absurd soft-heartedness," as Cyril mentally characterized it, had made this division absolutely necessary.

But it was not into his own kindly-governed, well-ordered department that Wilkinson led his ward.

He turned into a small room, where a pale man was busily writing, and at the same time overlooking a long room, where about seventy girls were at work before busily whirling machinery.

"Good morning, Watkins," the old gentleman said. "I was in hopes you were taking a holiday."

"Thank you, sir," was the reply, in a dejected tone. "I can't well quit work, sir; there are the wife and six little ones, you see."

"Have you told Mr. Ormsby the doctor says that your life depends upon a few weeks of rest and pure air?"

"Yes, sir. He's not keeping me, but he says if I go he must fill my place, and that means starvation for my family. I could never get a new situation as feeble as I am now."

"How long have you been here, Mr Watkins?"

"Seventeen years, sir. I was with old Mr. Ormsby before you came, sir."

"A faithful servant seventeen years," said Mr. Wilkinson, in a low tone, "and a few weeks rest may save his life!"

At that moment Margaret shrank a little nearer her guardian.

Through the window from which Mr. Watkins overlooked the loom room, she could see Cyril Ormsby walking briskly about, his voice harsh and imperative, finding fault here and there, his eyes keenly scrutinising every item of the work.

Not a face in the long room was brightened by the presence of the master.

Fingers worked more rapidly, eyes, were fastened persistently upon the looms, and every one seemed aware of a stern taskmaster's gaze.

But Mr. Wilkinson obeyed the mute petition of the shrinking figure and pleading eyes of his ward, and led Margaret out.

It were too tedious a task to follow every step of these two as they passed from room to room, everywhere meeting some assurance of Mr. Wilkinson's own hold upon the hearts of the "hands," and their terror of Cyril Ormsby's harshness.

There was no word spoken as Mr. Wilkinson and Margaret walked to the office again.

Once there, the old gentleman spoke, very gravely—

"As your guardian, Margaret, I can speak to you no word against Cyril Ormsby.

"He is a rich man, of good social position, of irreproachable moral reputation, a church member, and a man whose standing in business circles is of the highest; a man who is a good match in every worldly sense. So much for your guardian.

"As a friend, who loves you as your own dead father might have loved you, who knows every noble impulse of your pure soul—as that friend, Margaret, I tell you I would rather see you lying beside your mother than the broken-hearted wife of such a man as Cyril Ormsby."

"I came to you as a friend—as almost a father," said Margaret, "and I thank you for keeping me from a life-long misery. To know my husband such a man as I now know Cyril Ormsby to be, would, as you say, break my heart."

"I would not tell you," said her guardian, "for you know I disliked him, and might have thought that dislike prejudiced me. But, Margaret, tell me you will not let this day's work shadow your life. You did not love Cyril, Margaret?"

"No; I reverenced what I believed a noble, generous nature. That reverence a mockery, I shall never break my heart for a man I thoroughly despise."

And so it happened that Cyril Ormsby, coming to claim the fortune he believed within his grasp, met only Mr. Wilkinson, with Margaret's polite but distinct refusal to resign herself or her fortune to his keeping.

Love and Poverty.

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

ONE day Mrs. Lorrimer's only daughter, Violette, was nowhere to be found; neither was the gentleman, Senor Espanol, who taught the guitar.

"May they not have gone together?"

The mother at once drove the slanderer from her presence, preferring the idea that her Violette was murdered.

However, before long a penitent letter, all blotted with tears, reached the poor old lady.

Violette was, indeed, married to Senor Espanol.

The more one loves a person the more furious does any deception on her part make one.

A less loving mother might have forgiven.

Stung to madness, this one wrote a terrible letter to the foolish girl who had so pained her.

The husband, a hot Spaniard, read it from beginning to end.

It insulted him, and he forbade his wife ever to see her parent again.

To do him justice, love, and no mercenary motive, had led him to elope with his pretty heiress.

So the gulf was fixed between the only two of the same blood who lived on earth, and Senor Espanol began to give lessons for two instead of one.

Then for three, then for four, then for five.

If he had lived a little longer, it would have been for six.

But the day the fourth child was born, a countryman, who mistook him for a rival, stabbed him in the back.

And so Violette, who would have been very happy with her music-master had he been less jealous, was left a widow with four babies, no money, and no accomplishment that had been sufficiently cultivated to earn a living by.

The poor little woman walked up and down, and cried.

That did not help her.

She looked over the relics of the past.

They were pretty pieces of jewelry, worth nothing.

The valuable things had all been sold long ago.

She glanced out of the window.

A woman with a very large basket, and no shoes, went begging along from door to door.

She began to take an interest in the ways and manners of beggars, as the awful expectation of becoming one began to haunt her.

"I could drown myself," she thought, "but I could not very well drown four children."

Then, leaning her chin on her hand, she watched from her lofty window another woman with a handkerchief over her head, going from door.

Was she begging?

It seemed not.

Once or twice she entered, and stayed some time.

At last she arrived at her own door, and she heard her going from one room to another.

There was a knock at her door.

She opened it, and the dark hair under the yellow silk handkerchief, the big black eyes, the rich complexion were there.

"Well?" she asked, inquiringly.

"Let me tell your fortune, lady?" said the woman.

"My fortune is told, since I have not a penny in the world," said Violette.

The woman turned away.

"Stop a moment," said Violette; "tell me one thing: in this age do people pay you to tell their fortunes?"

"No age is too old," said the woman, to whom the world presented but one idea. "I just told an old lady's fortune below here. I'm a gipsy. I'm a seventh child. I see the future. I'll take any little bit of jewelry if you haven't any money. Have your fortune told?"

But Violette shook her head and closed the door.

"I cannot steal; and to beg I am ashamed," said she to herself. "After it is dark enough to-night, I'll go out and tell fortunes."

She put the children to bed, and then, disguised in veil and shawl, went forth on her errand.

She wandered along, and came at last to the pure, sweet homes of luxury.

In the end she stood before her mother's windows.

There was a light, and through the lace curtains she saw a table spread, and the shadow of a figure she knew to be her mother's on the curtain, and there, drawing down the blind, was Martha, who had nursed her when a child.

Tears filled her eyes.

It was a Paradise which she never hoped to regain.

Had not her mother written:

"A curse upon you. Never darken my doors again, unless you wish to hear me utter it."

But here at least she had not the terror of strangers upon her; she could beg or tell fortunes.

She would tell fortunes.

Martha was superstitious, and always had dreams of matrimony, and of the coming back of a lover who had gone to sea when she was in her teens, and had never been heard of since.

She crept up to the window, and tapped on the glass.

Martha opened the door.

The veiled figure drew near her.

"Please let me tell your fortune," she said.

"Bother," said Martha; "I'm past fortunes."

"What?" said Violette, "with a lover at sea?"

"Lord save us!" said Martha.

"And in one place twenty years," said Violette.

"You know more than is good," said Martha.

"I know a good deal," replied the figure, slowly.

"Stop a bit," resumed Martha; "could you see where people are, what's become of them, and all that?"

She paused a moment in study, and then spoke again:

"For instance, a girl that's been gone eight years, could you look for her in a dream like, as I've heard they can, and find her?"

"Yes, I think I could," said Violette, turning her head.

"I'll have them," Martha said, pointing to a chair, in the hall, and hurried into the dining-room.

She came back in a moment.

"Come—missus would speak with you," she said.

And Violette, trembling so that she could scarcely stand, entered her mother's presence.

No love is like a mother's.

Violette had known that since she cast it off.

She knew it now, looking on the pale face where wrinkles had come so thickly, on the hair—all turned grey now—on the sad eyes, that were so bright when she last saw them.

She longed to kneel at her mother's feet and beg forgiveness, but she dared not yet—had not she sinned too deeply to hope for pardon?

She stood in silence, with her head bowed down.

"They say you are a fortune-teller," said Mrs. Lorrimer. "I have something to ask you."

Violette bowed.

"It should be darker," she said. "Will you lower the light?"

Martha turned the gas down and stood behind her lady's chair—and there was silence.

Violette had cast back her veil, but the firelight was not bright enough to show her features.

"Lady," she said, in a low voice, "it is not gold or silver that I see; it is nothing that can be bought for money. What I see is a girl."

"Good Heaven!" cried the old lady, excitedly.

"A girl of sixteen, with fair hair and blue eyes," said Violette. "That was what she was when you saw her last. Am I not right?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Lorimer.

"You loved her," said Violette; "she loved you. But she deceived you—she was wicked—wicked—wicked; but there was an excuse for her. She fell in love; she was mad for a while. You have cast her off; she is gone. You will never see her more."

"Hush, hush!" cried Mrs. Lorimer; "she was not bad. I was wicked; I knew what it was to love, yet I forsook her because she knew it, too. Look again; how does life use her?"

"She is a widow, and very poor," said Violette; "so wretchedly poor that she does not know where to get bread; but she will not come to you; you would curse her; you could not forgive her. You will never see her again."

The old lady started nervously from her chair.

"What are you? How do you know the secrets of my life, the words I most repent having uttered? Tell me that I shall see her once more. Tell me where I shall

and her. My little one—my Violette—where is she?"

And then the old lady fell upon her knees and clasped her hand.

"She is here," she cried. "Mother, she is here."

And the two wept together in each other's arms.

All was forgiven.

And the great mansion is no longer desolate.

There are little children's voices there, and mother and daughter are together once more.

The Missing Wife.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

HELEN HUNTER was the prettiest and sweetest girl, to my thinking, that I had ever seen, and she returned my love with an equal tenderness.

I had not known her many months when I put my engagement ring upon her finger, and she promised to marry me as soon as I was settled.

More fortunate than most young clergymen I had not long to wait; and the day I became pastor at M——, I urged her to set the day for our nuptials, and we were married within a month.

Never shall I forget the day upon which I brought her home, or the delight she expressed at the sight of our picturesque garden, with its great trees, and the old disused well, picturesque sun dial, and the great ivy which overran the sides of the house and the low brick wall that surrounded the enclosure.

Nothing should be disturbed, she said.

A few bright flowers should glow in the beds, but otherwise the old garden should remain intact.

We had been married a week when we went out into the garden about twilight to plant the seeds she had brought from her home.

She knelt down beside the box-edged borders and turned up the dark mould with a dainty little trowel I had given her for the purpose.

I remember her dress.

It was a rich dark silk, with a gleam of garnet through its prevailing shadow, and at her throat and in her ears she wore a set of rubies that were an heirloom in her family.

The costume accorded well with her dark beauty, her velvet eyes and crimson cheeks.

No one could have looked more charming.

We crouched close together on the gravel path.

I felt we must look like a pair of silly children to the grim old servant who came to me with the announcement that—

"Donald Black was very bad indeed, and wanted me."

I am afraid I obeyed the summons less happily than I ought.

"I shall wait tea for you, if you are ever so late, Edward," she said, as I left her to go into the house.

Having secured my hat and cane, I returned to the garden, where Helen was gathering some flowers from one of the borders.

"I will not be long," I said, "I will be back to tea," and then, with a kiss, I left her.

Donald kept me well employed for three hours.

However, the old man was by no means dangerously ill.

As I hurried home, I recalled with pleasure the sight of his old wife bending over him, and thought how love lived on through care and change, and how this aged woman had once been a girlish bride and Donald a gay bridegroom, and how it was plain to see that he could never be to her the uninteresting old creature he was to others, just because of the old love between them.

And then it came to me, so happily, so sweetly, that if such hearts were so true, that of one like my Helen could be truer still; and that all life's ill would fall harmlessly upon me if I were to be loved as she loved me now, throughout my life.

I had dreaded old age a little, but if we were spared to each other, what was there for me to fear?

She would always be beautiful to me, I always young to her.

The golden glasses of love would throw a glory over everything, and hallow life for us.

With these thoughts I passed my threshold and looked into the parlor.

The tea-table was spread there.

Her chair and mine faced each other as usual, but both were empty.

There was no one in the room.

I waited a moment, standing before the fire, which, in this spring weather, was acceptable.

Then surprised that my wife did not come to meet me, went upstairs in search of her.

She was not in her room, nor in any other.

Perhaps she was still in the garden.

I hurried downstairs again, and passed out at the back door.

"Helen," I called; "Helen."

No voice answered.

Was I foolish enough to feel alarmed?

It seemed so.

I laughed at myself, and called still louder—

"Helen, Helen, Helen!" But still no answer.

And now I began to hope that she was hiding from me, for a joke; though such jests were not usual with her.

"I know where you are, Helen," I cried. "Come out of your corner—come, Helen."

Still there was no answer.

"She is in the kitchen," I said to myself.

"I'll find her there."

I hurried up the path.

My foot struck something.

I stooped.

It was the little saucer that had held the seeds.

Farther on was the trowel she had been using when I left her.

It was contrary to Helen's habits to leave anything lying untidily scattered about, and a vague alarm possessed me as I entered the kitchen.

"Your mistress?" I began.

Ann the old woman, and her daughter Jane, looked up at me in a startled way.

"She went with you, didn't she, sir?" asked Ann.

"With me?"

"Yes."

"No!" I said.

"That's curious," said Jane.

"We thought she must," said Ann.

Then I saw the girl's eyes distend with a look of terror.

And "God have mercy on us all!" said the old woman.

"Why do you say that now? What do you fear?

"My wife must be about the place. Nothing can have happened. Nothing ——"

Then I faltered, paused, and staggered against the wall.

Old Jane brought me a glass of cold water.

It revived me.

But I no longer affected any calmness.

I knew some accident had befallen my wife, and all that I could hope was that it was not a fatal one.

Followed by my servants I went through house and garden.

We looked in every room and every closet, under every bush and tree, where the ivy shadows fell, where the tall shrubs grew.

We went to the old well, but the great stone lay across its brink.

"If she could have fallen in, she could not have put the stone back," said Jane.

And I saw the absurdity of the dread that had crossed my mind.

Once I thought I saw her form lying across the path, and ran forward with a cry to raise it.

It was only a black shadow thrown from a great oleander by the rising moon, which my fancy had transfigured.

In a word, our search was fruitless at home, in the neighborhood, in the village, and in the surrounding country.

Many came to my aid.

All was done that could be done.

She was gone, vanished, as it seemed, from the face of the earth.

The only clue we had was the assertion of the younger servant that she had heard a cry from the garden that had frightened her.

She had told her mother, but the old woman's hearing was duller, and she had heard nothing.

It was cruel, as I knew, to suspect these women of having injured Helen, or of knowing anything of her disappearance, but they were suspected by others—not by me—examined and acquitted.

Then faintly and darkly, suspicion fell upon even me.

I knew it was said that I had wearied of my wife, and rid myself of her.

This passed at last, and the story accepted by the vulgar herd was that my wife had left me for another lover.

I knew her pure as any angel, but I could not blame strangers for not knowing her as well.

What did it matter to me what was thought?

My life was emptied of its joy; my home was desolate.

I continued my vain search.

I advertised.

I employed detectives.

This went on for years without bringing me even the sad relief of knowing some terrible truth.

I grew to be an old man very early; my hair lay white upon my temples before I was forty.

I kept in my little church, for if Helen were living, she would find me there better than elsewhere.

If she were dead, it seemed to me that some token of her fate must come to me at last.

Twenty years had passed, and still there was no answer to my prayer for tiding of her.

There was a prison some five miles from M——, a grey and gloomy place.

A man was to be executed for a foul murder.

He was a hardened wretch, but there was all the more need for spiritual aid; and the prison chaplain being very ill at the time, I was requested to visit him.

I went, of course.

It was, strange to say, the anniversary of Helen's disappearance.

The same spring weather—warm at noon, cool at night—and the grass was springing in the garden, fresh and green; and the buds were on the trees and on the lilac bushes, just as on the day when I looked back and saw my wife smiling at me over her shoulder, as she knelt beside the garden beds, scattering the flower seeds.

I though of all this even as I entered the prison gates and the cell of the doomed man.

I found him, now that death was near, more penitent than I had hoped.

His guilt was established, and he made no effort to deny it.

And when I had talked to him some time, he wept, sobbing heavily, as such men do when grief overcomes them.

"This was a fight, and with a man," he said, when he regained his composure.

"The God you talk of may forgive that. It's nothing worse than thousands do. But prayers can't save me.

"I've done one thing in my life that can't be got over.

"That would drag me down if all the angels tried to save me.

"I killed a woman once. It's a long while ago, but I've seen her face ever since.

"It rises up in the dark before me. Now, if I was to look over my shoulder I'd see it there.

"Some think that confessing does one good.

"I'll tell you. It can't hurt, and I'll die easier.

"I was tempted by her jewels, and she was alone in a garden, in a quiet place. I jumped the fence, and grabbed 'em.

"She screamed and struggled, and I stabbed her.

"Then when I had the jewels—ruby earrings they were, and a pin—I took a great stone off an old well and dropped the body in.

"I can hear the water splash now as it did when I dropped her in, and the sound of a girl singing in the kitchen of the house.

"I can see the blood on my hands, and hear the gravel under my feet as I ran away.

"I got some money by the job, but I took no comfort in it.

"I've never taken any since. A woman; and young and pretty, and doing no harm to me.

"What is the matter?

"Here! Help! Great Heaven, how you look!"

I heard him cry this out as I lost consciousness.

The truth had come to me at last.

I knew it had, before he told the tale to others, and owned that the scene of his terrible story was the personage at M—— before they lifted the stone from the old well, and found in the mire at its bottom the broad wedding ring which proved that what else lay there was all that was left of my beloved Helen.

DAY-DREAMS.—Ah, we may laugh at those who indulge in day-dreams, and consider them too visionary for this practical world of ours; we call them romantic, sentimental, yet who among us has not at one time in his life indulged in this same day-dreaming, although the time may date back to youth's bright morning?

We erected castles without number, where beauty, love and happiness were to reign; and when years sped on, and our air-castles have one by one been dashed to the ground, we learn to look upon that which we once fondly cherished for a future reality, as only dreams from which we have been rudely awakened.

It is often very hard to bear, to have our wings suddenly clipped and be obliged to give up our aerial soaring, and settle down into a commonplace life; yet the most of us do so, and, after a while become strangely practical with it, too.

We indulge in a few new dreams, but I am inclined to think that we still cherish those old dreams, dreamed in our youthful time, as the sweetest pages memory's book contains.

We are all apt to fall short in the goal our youthful minds saw in the future, and strove for, yet we may be farther on the road, and our lives made better for thus striving.

Let the young dream on; the cares and realities of life will come soon enough without those who have ceased to dream croaking to them of a demolition of all their air-castles in the future.

If disappointment comes, as it did to us, and may to them, let them hope with us that when our feet have passed over the dark river, and tread the shores of the eternal paradise, we shall gather up the broken threads of our earthly dreams and weave them into a blessed reality there.

M. S.

Neuralgia.

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"I am a great deal stronger than when I commenced its use. * * * One thing I must tell you. It stopped the neuralgia. I took cold and feared that I would have it for two or three weeks, as I generally stood the pain for that long before I would take chloral, the only thing that ever stopped it before, and I disliked to take it so much that I would put it off until I thought I could not live for the agony. But this time it only lasted two days. When I began the Compound Oxygen I could scarcely sit up an hour; now I can sit up most of the time."

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Seeva.

BY HENRY PRITH.

A SHIP was on her course from Calcutta to Liverpool.

Among the passengers aboard was beautiful Mrs. Imogene Clarkson, the bride of a few weeks, with her husband—a naval officer, on leave of absence.

"What shore is this we are passing, Henry?" she said to him one morning, as she watched the land, a league distant.

"That is Cape Comorin—the place our Seeva came from."

Imogene turned aside her head and pouted.

Just then, Seeva, who was a Hindoo girl, emerged from the cabin.

For five years this person had been in the service of Henry's mother, who was a resident of Calcutta, and she had become much attached both to the old lady and her son, by whom she was kindly treated.

Imogene, with a woman's quick penetration, soon discovered a secret.

The dusky girl loved her husband, and he did not know it.

Nevertheless, with the natural selfishness of a young bride, the latter concluded that Henry showed too much interest in this servant.

Queer, quaint and cunning-looking was Seeva.

Although but fourteen, yet she seemed a woman.

Her dark skin glowed with health; her face was as round as an apple; she had weird, black eyes, and her thick, raven hair hung far below the hollow of her back.

Now, she stood, her supple form inclined sideways, in an attitude of inimitable grace, watching the land.

Imogene drew her husband aside.

"I have heard you say she has relatives living there," said the fair bride. "I request you to send her ashore and leave her there."

"What? You must be only jesting. You consented to her accompanying us to England."

"I have changed my mind.

"There is something about the girl I do not like."

"Let me assure you, you could not have a better servant."

But the young woman shook her head.

Besides her jealousy of the poor girl, she could never see those weird black eyes without experiencing a sensation of dread—almost of fright.

Knowing how treacherous were many of the Hindoos, she had at times feared that Seeva, loving her husband, might even go so far as to poison her, or plunge a dirk in her bosom.

Finding he could not persuade Imogene to let the servant remain with them, Clarkson at last went to the girl and told her that she would have to go ashore at the Cape—that his wife had concluded not to take her with them to England.

"From the Cape," he added, "you can make your way to my mother's."

Instantly the large eyes of the Hindoo expanded with an expression of surprise and grief.

Bounding to the side of her new mistress, she threw herself at her feet, and, with tears streaming down her cheeks, begged that she would not send her away.

The wild, dark orbs turned so pleadingly to her face, the convulsive sobs, the plaintive, heart-rending voice, the clasped hands, the deep anguish showing in every feature, were too much for Imogene to withstand.

For the moment, forgetting her jealousy and fear, she took the arms of the pleader, and raised her to her feet.

"There, there," she said kindly, "you shall go with us."

"Oh, thank, thank," cried Seeva, clapping her hands.

The rosy color came back to her round face, her black eyes danced with pleasure.

Then, turning away, Imogene again became serious, and almost blamed herself for having listened to the supplication of the girl, whose joy, she at once inferred was caused by her being permitted to remain near the man she secretly loved.

In the afternoon a calm rested on the sea.

"How I would like to go ashore," said Mrs. Clarkson to her husband, as she gazed toward the coast, not a league distant.

"Well, then, we will go," answered Henry.

The captain's jolly-boat was soon lowered, and away they went, to soon gain the beach, Henry having his gun with him that he might shoot game if any should be seen.

Besides the young naval officer, Imogene and Seeva, the boat contained two sailors.

"Come, my lads," cried Henry, noticing a buffalo on a hill, a short distance off. "Come and help me capture that fine fellow."

"You are going away from me," said his wife, with some anxiety.

"Only for a little while. You and Seeva can amuse yourself by picking up shells until I come back."

He and his companions were soon out of sight in the thicket.

Then Imogene and Seeva strolled along the beach searching for curious shells.

Now and then going off in different directions, they very soon became separated.

Suddenly, while climbing over a rock near the edge of the sea, Mrs. Clarkson's foot was caught in a jagged cleft, from

which she vainly strove to extricate it.

She called for assistance, but looking round her she could see nothing of the Hindoo girl.

She noticed that the ship was hidden by a fog, which had risen in that direction, so that she knew her uncomfortable situation could not be discovered from aboard.

She made another useless effort to extricate herself.

At the same moment she heard a strange noise—a hissing sound—followed by a rippling, as of some object moving through the water.

On turning, she beheld, emerging round the angle of a rock in the sea, about ten yards off, first the horrid, elongated head, and then the neck of a huge Hydrus—a species of the many ferocious water serpents that infest these regions.

Slowly, higher and higher rose the head above the surface, until about fifteen feet of the body was uplifted, when it remained stationary, the round, glittering eyes flashing like points of flame.

For a few moments it maintained its motionless attitude; then its head was turned from side to side, as if it were looking for prey.

The serpent was indeed a hideous creature, whose aspect was well calculated to appal the heart of the spectator.

Its mouth was shaped something like that of a horse, and from the edges projected stiff hairs like those of the seal.

Just below the head, on each side of the neck was a fin, outspread like the wing of a large bird, and dotted with white spots.

The body, striped from them to the tail, which was "flaked" at the extremity, was about thirty feet in length, and that part of it beneath the surface of the sea, where it could be distinctly seen through the clear, pellucid water, was coiled in the form of a ring.

All at once the eyes were turned toward Imogene.

Then the mouth opened, disclosing sharp fangs, and, with a loud hiss, like the rushing of steam from a pipe, the serpent glided toward the young woman.

For a full minute she remained motionless with fright.

All power to speak or to move had deserted her.

She could only stare at the creature with the wild, fixed gaze of terror.

As the monster drew nearer, however, she shook off the spell upon her, and while vainly struggling to release herself from the rock, uttered shriek after shriek.

On came the serpent.

Its eyes were like lurid balls of fire.

It beat the sea with its fins, and its fanged jaws swooped up the water.

Soon it was within three yards of the horrified woman, who then gave herself up for lost.

But now a boat suddenly came dashing round the rock upon which she was fixed.

It was the little craft in which Imogene had been pulled ashore, and it contained one occupant, who, skilled in working the canoes of her native land, sculled the vessel with an experienced hand.

"Seova, Seova!" cried Mrs. Clarkson.

"Me hear you cry, and come to save you!" exclaimed the brave girl.

The boat right between her mistress and the serpent she directed the boat.

The monster lifted its head, thrust towards her its horrid jaw.

But Seova, who had first dropped her oar and picked up the boat hatchet, made a quick blow at her antagonist.

The blade of the weapon almost severed the serpent's head from the body.

There was a tremendous rush, a foaming of the water, a loud hiss, and a half-smothered cry.

But so thick was the flying spray, that for several moments Imogene could not see the Hindoo girl.

When the spray cloud had passed away, the spectator uttered an exclamation of horror.

Poor Seova had been caught by the serpent, which, in its dying agony and rage, had twined coil after coil of its horrid, slimy body, with crushing force, around the form of the unfortunate girl.

Drawn out of the boat, she clung for one brief moment to the gunwale; then down she went, folded in the deadly embrace of the Hydrus, which sank, with its victim, to the bottom of the sea.

For several minutes a few bubbles shot up to the surface, after which the water was as calm as before.

Looking through the clear surface, Imogene could then see, lying upon the sandy bottom, a few fathoms beneath her, the motionless form of the lost Seova, wrapped in the folds of the serpent, which was now dead.

Meanwhile Lieutenant Clarkson and the two sailors arrived upon the rock, to which they had been drawn by the cries of the terrified woman.

They soon released her from the rift in which her foot was caught, when she gave an account of what had happened.

For some time the men sadly watched the dead form of Seova, in the coils of the Hydrus.

Then Lieutenant Clarkson assisted his weeping bride into the boat, which had drifted among the rocks, and the party returned to the ship.

A breeze sprang up, and the vessel was soon bearing far away from the watery grave of the young Hindoo.

Now, in England, Imogene often mourns that she so misjudged the character of the poor child of the Hindoo land, who, so far from wishing to kill her young mistress, as the latter had feared she might do, had sacrificed her own life to save her.

The Lost Wager.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

"SHE'S as beautiful as Hebe," said Mr. Mortimer Middleton.

"Indeed," said his nephew's wife, rather faintly.

"Eyes deep blue, like mid-summer sky—hair lustrous as flaxen gold—teeth like twin rows of pearl," pursued the middle-aged gentleman.

"She must be very pretty," said Mrs. Middleton, junior.

"Pretty," echoed the old bachelor. "Pretty's no word for it."

"And young?"

"Well, not so very," admitted Mr. Middleton. "She's five-and-thirty, but she has the complexion of eighteen."

"That's easily accounted for," said Harry, his nephew. "What with 'Balms of Venus,' people can have whatever complexion they please nowadays, provided they've got the money to pay for it."

"Nonsence," barked out Mr. Middleton. "As if my Aurelia would condescend to such petty artifices as that. She's purity, frankness, single-mindedness itself."

"Oh," said Harry Middleton, "is she?"

"Certainly she is," said the senior. "Do you think I could love a woman who was made up like an actress?"

"People do," said Harry, dubiously.

"But not people of my standard," retorted his uncle, loftily.

And Mrs. Harry thought remorsefully of the little china powder pot, with its downy puff, which she used to "cool down" her complexion on hot days.

"Harry," said she, when Uncle Mortimer had taken his leave, "do you really think its wrong to use a dab of powder in hot weather?"

"Nonsense," said Harry, with an upward elevation of his handsome Grecian nose. "I dare say that desperate old maid, that uncle is going to marry, is painted like a Jezebel."

"Oh, Harry."

"Sims says so. And Sims knows her—Miss Aurelia Hopkins, that's her name. And she's wagered a diamond bracelet with one of her friends that she will be married to the rich old bachelor before Christmas. I wonder what sort of a wife that'll be for uncle."

"But, Harry, why don't you tell him?" cried the little wife.

"Because, my dear, he's too far gone to believe a word of it.

"Oh, dear," sighed Mrs. Middleton. "And of course he'll withdraw your little allowance now."

Of course, admitted Harry.

"I was told [illegible] Mrs. Middleton.

"[illegible] and Aurelia Christina has written to ask if we can lend her money enough to send little Jane Charlie to that famous surgeon. Things always go contrary, don't they, Harry?"

"Don't fret, my pet," said Harry Middleton, caressingly stroking the golden head that bent so low. "It'll all be right, if uncle does get married. I'll find something to do."

But as he went out, gaily whistling, to keep up a brave exterior, he did wish, most earnestly in his secret heart, that Miss Aurelia Hopkins hadn't been fit to cast her siren spells over the heart of the rich bachelor uncle, whose heir-apparent he had always been.

"If I believed honestly and truly, that she would make him happy," thought Harry, "I wouldn't grudge his money to her. But I don't believe anything of the sort."

Little Effie had the toothache next day. Mrs. Middleton clasped her hands in despair.

"Oh, Harry," she said to her husband, "I'm afraid she'll have to have that tooth out."

"Very well," said Harry. "Take her to the dentist's."

"Oh, Harry, I daren't," faltered the little woman.

"Then I will," said Harry, laughing.

The dentist was engaged just at the moment of their entrance, but would be at liberty presently.

Little Effie sat down, quaking and trembling, in an easy chair.

"Oh, papa," faltered she, "I wish there wasn't any such things as teeth."

While Mr. Middleton, taking up a newspaper, chanced to knock a little pasteboard box off the mantel—a pasteboard box, neatly pictured with a ring of india-rubber.

"Hallow!" said Mr. Middleton. "What's this? I know I never owned any tooth. 'Miss Aurelia Hopkins' [illegible] repeated, reading aloud the superscription on the lid.

"Yes, said the little dentist, hurrying to the [illegible] 'Miss Hopkins' own set. Ought to have been sent yesterday.

"Now set?" vaguely repeated Harry Middleton. "Set of what?"

"Of teeth, to be sure—uppers and lowers," said the dentist. "Ah, you may look surprised, but I make teeth for some of our very best society. And if you yourself should ever require [illegible] yes, yes, I'm coming, sir."

And the man of molars hurried back to his inner sanctum.

When Effie's malignant tooth was safely drawn, and Harry Middleton had paid therefor, he paused a minute on the threshold.

"Ah, by the way," said he, "I'm going directly past Miss Hopkins's house—you're probably aware that she's to be married to my uncle next month—and if it would be any accommodation to you, I could leave those teeth for her."

"Much obliged, I'm sure," said the dentist. "If you would take the trouble—I've only one errand boy, and he is so unreliable and forgetful that I sometimes scarcely know which way to turn—much obliged. Here they are, sir."

So Mr. Harry Middleton strode off, chuckling to himself, with Miss Aurelia Hopkins's false teeth in his hand.

It was just about the hour at which his infatuated elderly relative was accustomed to leave bouquets, books, or bonbons at the door of his inamorata.

"If I could only catch him," thought Harry.

And, as if sent by some kindly fate in answer to his inward aspiration, Mortimer came briskly trotting around the corner at that very second.

He did not see his nephew.

How should he when he had no eyes for any thing but that front drawing-room window, at which the fair Aurelia was smiling a sight-sweet welcome.

But Harry beckoned to a boy that was flattening his nose in front of a baker's window, and whispered a message in his ear, accompanying it by a fee.

"Yezzir," and the [illegible] across the street like an arrow from a bow.

"If you please, sir," said he, boldly, addressing the astonished old bachelor, just as he had mounted the second step of the flight, "I'm from Belcombe's the dentist, with Miss Hopkins's teeth."

"Miss Hopkins's—what?" demanded the astounded bachelor.

"Teeth, sir," bawled the boy; and as the elderly gentleman yet recoiled from the little pasteboard box, he sprang nimbly up the steps and pulled the bell.

"Miss Hopkins's teeth," said he, thrusting the parcel into the hand of a blue-ribboned maid-servant.

"Mary Ann," said Mr. Middleton, addressing the maid in accents of solemn adjuration, "tell me the truth. Does your mistress wear false teeth?"

"Lawk, sir," tittered Mary Ann.

"Answer me, Mary Ann."

But Mary Ann, with a second giggle, endeavored to escape.

But Mr. Middleton made a grasp at the box.

Mary Ann loyal and loyal to her mistress's interest, resisted, and the upshot of the matter was, that the little box came in two, and—out rolled the grinning set of "uppers and lowers"—an undeniable ivory fact.

Mr. Middleton jumped back.

Mary Ann uttered an eldritch shriek, and Mr. Harry Middleton, who had watched the *tableau* from the other side of the street, knew that it was time for him to beat a retreat, and beat it accordingly.

Uncle Mortimer came to his nephew's home that evening.

"Harry, my boy," said he, "it's all over—my wedding, I mean. It's all up."

"Is it?" said sympathetic Harry.

"Don't allude to the subject again," said Mr. Middleton. "She's treacherous. I have been deceived all through. I daresay the rest of her is as false as her—but no matter. I am disenchanted at last. I have bid her an eternal adieu."

After all this, it is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Belcombe is no longer Miss Aurelia Hopkins's dentist.

And the diamond bracelet wager is hopelessly lost.

Having Her Wish.

BY JULIA GODDARD.

"OH, Helen, pity me!" cried Alice Bevoy, as she leaned her head upon her friend's shoulder that bent above her.

"Look there."

And Alice's white fingers pointed to a robe of snowy satin, and a long, delicate veil.

A box of jewels stood beside them, glittering in the pink glow of the sunset.

"He will dress me like a quoon, and I—I shall hate him.

"God grant that I may die ere the time comes for me to wear them."

"Hush, hush, Alice. Have you not told me that Arthur St. Clair was noble? Is he not rich, and proud, and handsome? What more do you desire?"

"Simpleton!" was the bitter answer. "Will my choice gall less because a royal master holds the key?

"He might be holy as Heaven, and I should loathe him."

"I cannot see it so. It is not probable that a woman can be utterly wretched in the love of any man who is strong, true, and tender.

"You will forget this by-and-by, dear Alice."

"Arthur St. Clair does not love me. He fancied me because I reminded him of someone he had once loved.

"Shall I ever forget, think you, that I have wronged the noblest man God ever made—forget that Amory Leigh cursed me?

"And yet you voluntarily gave him up."

"Yes—[illegible] I was a [illegible] Helen, you were [illegible] I was [illegible] Helen, you are handsome, better, more accomplished than I. If you might only exchange places with me. If you might only exchange places with me.

I will break the matter to him—tell him how kind and good you are, and I am sure he will not deny me. Tell me Helen, will you save me if you can?"

Helen returned her gaze with one of compassion, as though she thought she had [illegible] mad, but shook her head with a sad smile.

"You do not realize what you are asking, dearest. I would do anything this side womanly modesty and truth to save you; but your plan is too wild. Besides——"

Helen faltered and blushed.

"You already love?" suggested Alice, whose quick eyes were not tardy to notice her agitation.

"Yes; and still more hopelessly than you," was Helen's low answer. "Listen, and I will tell you about it. Before my father died, four years ago, we were very wealthy, and, of course, I had many admirers. Among them was Walter Norwood, a talented and respected, though poor young man, whom I loved dearly, and who returned my love: but my father, being very proud, would not consent to my marrying a poor man, and I would not disobey him. We were separated, and Walter went to California, since then I have not heard of him."

* * * * * * *

Early in the afternoon of the next day, the [illegible] came rattling down the road that led to the little cottage, and stopped before the door.

A moment later, Arthur St. Clair greeted the little group that had gathered at the door to welcome him.

But it was [illegible] so eagerly on [illegible].

With a rapid bound he stood at Helen's side.

"Found at last, my Helen!"

"Walter Norwood!"

"Walter Norwood!" said Alice.

"Yes," said Arthur; "my name is or was Walter Norwood. When I went to California, five years ago, I [illegible] employ of a man of the name of Arthur St. Clair, with whom I remained until [illegible] years ago, when he died, leaving me his entire fortune on condition that I took his name which I did. I then commenced searching for this dear friend here. You know the rest."

As Arthur finished speaking, Alice left the room.

We will follow her example, only mentioning that there were two weddings shortly afterwards, and that the brides were Alice and Helen.

Did She Die?

"No; she lingered and suffered along "pining away all the time for years, the "doctors doing her no good; and at last "was cured by this Hop Bitters the papers "say so much about. Indeed! Indeed! "How thankful we should be for that medicine."

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.—A terrible affair recently happened in Pueblo. An employe of the railroad brought home all his savings, $300, in bank bills, as a surprise to show his wife, who did not know he had that amount of money. Hearing the approach of the train he put them on the table and ran out to his work, and his wife went to the door to look after him. During her absence their little [illegible] daughter crawled up to the table and seeing the roll of bright-colored papers threw them in the fire. The father on his return on learning [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Our Young Folks.

NEARLY LOST.

BY PIPKIN.

"WELL, where are you three worthies off to?"

The "three worthies" were I, Marjory Grey; wee Jackie, my brother; and Lion, a dog of ours.

The speaker was our ten-year-old brother Hugh, who looked down upon us with a sort of playful contempt, as elder brothers are sometimes wont to do.

We were on a visit to our grandmother, a "real, long, jolly visit," as Hugh termed it, of four summer months.

"Out for a stroll," replied Jackie, with a little careless swagger peculiar to him.

"Take care you don't stroll into mischief then," was the answer.

"We don't stroll that way, never," observed Jackie, giving no thought to grammar.

Oh, I don't know that," said doubtful Hugh, and then we passed out into the autumn gladness, and he wandered in toward the house.

"He thinks we can't take care of ourselves, and we can," remarked Jackie, as we went sauntering along.

"Yes, we can, better than he," returned I, with a girl's superiority.

Then we looked this way and that, and said nothing.

"Oh, isn't it jolly?" observed Jackie, presently.

"Yes," said I in brief response, and Lion pricked up his ears and wagged his tail, as if he thought so too.

We were soon within the woods, with their shadow and mystery, sunny glades here and there visible, hares and rabbits, dormice, squirrels, and wriggling snakes, all astir with happy life.

Oh, oh, oh.

Now we fancied ourselves the Babes in the Wood, now we talked of little Willie and his dog Cæsar, and now—ah, now—Lion came out in his true colors.

Away he darted, now chasing a hare, now a rabbit.

Now he barked at a snake, till the creature reared its head in quite an alarming manner to us little folk.

"He is a real spoil-sport," said Jackie; "I wish we'd not brought him."

"We shall be taken up for poachers," returned I, and at every rustling sound among the leaves beneath our feet I feared to see a gamekeeper bearing down upon us.

Once and again away darted Lion, Jackie after him, I bringing up the rear.

The dog caught a squirrel, and I had just time to take it from him and save its life.

"How now—what business have you got in honest folk's woods, a worryin' their tame squirrels wi' your warments o' dogs?"

This was the speech which greeted us from a scarecrow of a boy, a head and shoulders taller than Jackie, with coal-black eyes and swarthy skin.

"'Tisn't your woods, and we didn't come to worry your tame squirrel," protested Jackie.

"'Tis our woods, and you've no right here—and we never sets nothink at your dogs."

"No, 'cause you haven't anything to set after them," said Jackie coolly, lowering his stick a moment, as Lion turned to scan the new comer.

"Come to me."

The lad was at my side in a moment, his swarthy hands claiming his little friend.

It was his friend, I knew it by the light which shone in his eyes as he took the tiny creature.

But now Lion was upon him; I believe he would have torn him down had not Jackie seized him by the collar.

"Then they'd best take themselves off wi' their dog, or I'll worry them, and you too, for wastin' your time on squirrels," was the threat.

"Why are ye here?" he asked of us, with a scowl which made us quiver.

"We're only out for a stroll," said Jackie, shifting nearer to me, still holding Lion's collar.

"Then just stroll yourself off," said the man.

"We're goin. Come, Marjory.

We joined hands, and essayed to pass them both—father and son we supposed them to be.

"No, you don't not that way," objected the man, barring our path with his arm.

"'Tis our way home," explained Jackie, humbly.

"No, 'tisn't, no more than other ways. That's your way—there you go."

He pointed with one brown finger in the direction we were to take; why he bade us go by that route I never knew; I believe it was in sheer perversity.

But we went, poor little pilgrims, as it were, into a strange land.

They watched us off, Lion giving them a parting bark; then we strayed away, deeper and deeper, into the mysterious wood.

Wandering on and on, we came at last to the margin where the trees were not so dense, and where a gurgling stream flowed between us and the open country beyond.

Why, not far from us lay the village, as it seemed to us, as we peered between the branches of the trees; our grandmamma's white house could be plainly seen—once across the river and we should soon be at home.

It was a deep, narrow, swirling river, with no bridge or means of crossing save a pole stretched athwart it—surely, this was not meant for a bridge.

"How shall we go over, Jackie?" I asked in dismay, as we stood scanning the water.

"I don't know," was his reply.

Then up and down on the river's bank we wandered, looking for a friendly bridge.

"Hugh would say we'd strolled into mischief, Jackie," said I, ready to cry, as I peered longingly through the trees, to where grandmamma's white house stood in the sunshine, as if it were waiting for us to come to it.

"Yes," returned Jackie, "he's always saying things to tease us."

"But 'tis true, Jackie, we are in mischief now; we ought not to have come so far and thought ourselves so big and wise," I made reply.

"Well, 'twould be silly to stay here and cry," returned Jackie, bravely; "we must go over."

"But how?"

"By the pole; that must be what it's there for."

"But how, Jackie—how?" cried I, in girlish excitement.

"Sideways, holding on to each other's hands."

The many-colored trees seemed to shake in dissent to the plan, the very flowers murmured that we could not do it, but to us we neither heard nor understood.

So with the dreary blue sky above watching, we started on our perilous feat—small Blondins in fact—with only a few geese on the river, dormice, squirrels, and peeping hares and rabbits to witness it.

Ah! a girl's head was never meant for such risky work.

Jackie might have done it, still, for him, it would have been a silly deed of daring in that great, silent wood.

Well, we were not half over before my head reeled in a giddy tremor of fear; I tottered; wee Jackie tottered with me; then down we went into the swirling waters.

And oh! we parted company as we fell, for I loosened my hold on Jackie's hand, to grasp at nothing.

Then I went swirling away and away, while I saw Lion striking out and seizing hold of Jackie.

Where was I going? What was about to happen?

"Ho, ho! little lady, I'll have ye," cried a voice, not Jackie's; no, nor was it Jackie who plunged my head and shoulders under the water.

Child as I was, the tears began to gather in my eyes as I watched the boy caress his darling.

"How, now, you brute?" cried a hoarse voice, as Lion still yelped and barked, restrained by Jackie's hand.

A dark, rough man, emerged from the trees, and approached us.

"Why are ye tossing words with them, and a leavin' your home?" he asked crossly of the lad.

"Their dog was worr'in' my squirrel, he was," muttered he, sullenly.

"Then they'd best take themselves off wi' their dog, or I'll worry them, and you too, for wastin' your time on squirrels," was the threat.

"Why are ye here?" he asked of us, with a scowl which made us quiver.

"'Twas your—your father's fault," said Jackie boldly, "he wanted us to get drowned by—"

"He ain't my father—never had one as I knows on. He's my master, and I stole a march on him, and maybe 'll catch a thrashin' for leavin' my work to see after you."

"What is your work?" asked Jackie.

"Sitting broom. That's our house."

Ah, yes! we could discern the cabins through the trees, in the direction in which the boy pointed.

"Now, what may your work be?" asked the stranger lad of Jackie, with a knowing wink.

"Nothing; I've no work to do," confessed he.

Ah, me! the words were scarcely spoken ere a heavy thwack fell on Bill Long's shoulder, and his dark scowling master stood over him with a strap.

"So this is how ye cheats me, is it," said he.

The boy laughed a woe-begone laugh, and left us; and anon by a circuitous way, near upon sundown, we reached home.

We never saw him again, but six months after a dark-faced, tearful-eyed boy came to grandmamma's house with a squirrel, and asked her to take and keep it for the sake of the little lady he saved from going into Molly's Kettle, as he was off to the city to seek his fortune.

And grandmamma, the dearest old lady in the world, took the little thing and gave it a home in an open outhouse in the garden, where, if it chose, it could run about in its own wild freedom.

They said Bill wept sorely over the little animal as he gave it up; poor boy, he must have been sadly pressed to have parted with Friskie.

Wee Jackie and I are growing old apace now, but we often talk of Bill Long—out somewhere, maybap, in the great unfriendly world still—of Friskie, long since dead, and our adventures in the woods and near the dread "Molly's Kettle."

A SENSE OF HONOR.

THE estate of Chantilly, one of the most beautiful in France, has for centuries been in the possession of wealthy nobles who have taken pride in spending their money on its adornments.

None probably contributed more to its splendor than the Prince of Condé; and the last proprietor, the Duc d'Aumale, with what has been accumulated by the wealth and taste and effort of many generations, has art treasures valued at fifteen million dollars.

In 1671 the Prince of Condé invited the King, Louis XIV., to visit him at Chantilly, and Louis honored his most illustrious general by accepting the invitation.

The place was famous then, as now, and the king himself had looked on it with covetous eyes, and had even reminded Condé of his royal power to take it if he chose.

Vatel, the chief of all the cooks, was to provide the food, and see that it was properly served.

At last, all things in readiness, the day arrived, and so did the king, and there was a grand promenade, a hunt, and a collation served out of doors, in a garden of jonquils.

As it grew dark, the grounds were illuminated with brilliant lanterns, and looked like an enchanted land.

Everything passed off most successfully till supper came; then, because of some unexpected guests, there was no roast at the last table.

Vatel was greatly overcome by this, and several times he said

"My honor is gone; this is a disgrace that I cannot endure."

To Gourville he said—

"My head fails me, it is twelve nights since I have slept; help me to give my orders."

Gourville tried his best to console him, but all in vain.

The joint that had failed at the twenty-fifth table continually haunted him, and he would not be comforted.

Gourville told the Prince, who went to him in his room and said—

"Vatel, all is well; why should you be so distressed?

"There never was anything so beautiful as the king's supper."

"Monseigneur," replied he, "your goodness overwhelms me, but I know that the roast was wanting at one of the tables."

"No harm has been done," said the Prince; "all is going well, so do not distress yourself."

Fire-works, costing sixteen thousand francs, had been prepared, and exactly at midnight they were to have been displayed.

For some reason they failed, and Vatel became more desponding yet, and unable to sleep, he started out at four o'clock in the morning, and wandered all about the place, which, of course, at that hour was quite deserted.

The freshness of the early dawn had no charm for his over-worked body and weary mind, and Vatel could see nothing, think of nothing, but the missing joint, and his own fancied disgrace.

Soon he met a fish-man bringing two loads of fish to the chateau, and asked him—

"Is this all?"

"Yes, sir," said the man, meaning that it was all he had brought, and not knowing that Vatel had sent to all the sea-port towns of France for his supply of fish.

He waited awhile, and as no more fish arrived, he became more and more excited, and in his morbid fear believed that these two small loads were really all the fish he would have for dinner.

Then he went in search of Gourville, and said—

"Sir, I shall not be able to survive this disgrace; my honor and reputation are at stake."

Gourville, who had before said all he could to comfort Vatel, now tried to laugh him out of his fears, but all to no purpose.

Vatel went to his own room and locked himself in.

Placing his sword against the door, he ran it through his heart.

Meanwhile, the fish were coming in on every side.

The servants were seeking Vatel to distribute it.

Finally, they went to his room, and, receiving no answer to their calls, they burst open the door, and there they found him dead!

The Prince of Condé was hurriedly summoned, and burst into tears when he saw the sad fate of his faithful servant.

Then Prince Condé went and told the king what had happened, adding mournfully—

"It was all on account of his high sense of honor."

The king expressed his sorrow, and said that he had for five years delayed his visit to Chantilly, knowing the great trouble it would cause, but he was grieved that this mournful tragedy should have been the result.

They all praised Vatel's high sense of honor.

They both praised and blamed his courage.

But poor Vatel was beyond the reach of praise or blame.

He had allowed himself to be overworked, and had taken no rest by night or day, in his zeal to have everything fitting the reception of the king; and, at last, having lost all power of discriminating between real and fancied evils, and imagining himself in irretrievable disgrace, took his own life!

APPEARANCE OF A TORNADO.—As the tornado now sweeps onward in its course, it rises and falls with a series of bounds, and, with a swaying motion, describes a zigzag course, now forming a chain or loops, and again shooting off on an obtuse angle, varying in the speed of its forward motion, which may be anywhere from ten to thirty miles an hour.

At the same time it is rapidly whirling on its axis in the opposite direction from a screw, or the hands of a clock, the air revolving around the vortex necessarily attaining a speed of several hundred miles an hour.

First widening, then contracting, now bounding above the tree-tops, and again descending to sweep the earth bare of every object within its reach, the aerial monster surges onward.

The largest forest trees, mere playthings in its grasp, are pulled up by the roots or snapped off like pipe-stems, substantial buildings are crushed like egg-shells, each disappears in the vortex and the debris carried several miles for a time, before it is again thrown off by centrifugal force, and falls by gravitation anywhere, everywhere as soon as released from the monster's grasp.

It is difficult accurately to describe the tornado's appearance and work, even for those who have been eye-witnesses, or who have personally passed through the horrors attending its course.

While accounts differ as to its appearance and behavior, as witnessed from different points of observation and under different circumstances, all substantially agree that it is cone-shaped, its motion rotary, that its apex resembles fire and smoke, and that vivid lightning and heavy rainfall usually accompany it.

In rare instances, electricity, in the form of St. Elmo's fires, will precede the vortex, and a white, steamy cloud will follow.

It will be observed that the form of the tornado-cloud is nicely illustrated by the "proof-plane" used in teaching natural philosophy.

The small end of the plane is most heavily charged with electricity, and, the nearer it approaches to a perfect point, the greater will be the accumulation; a high tension is caused, and the electricity must escape by some conductor.

So, in the tornado-cloud, the smaller the point or stem, the greater the force exerted when it meets the earth.

AN old miner was shown a bag of samples by a newly-arrived prospector and asked what it would run. He turned the specimen over, held it up by the light, and ruminated: "I should say that if you can save the gold in this and catch the silver, and not waste the lead, it might run about—well, about two dollars to the county."

WASHINGTON, D. C., May, 15, 1880.

GENTLEMEN:—Having been a sufferer for a long time from nervous prostration and general debility, I was advised to try Hop Bitters. I have taken one bottle, and I have rapidly been getting better ever since, and I deem it the best medicine I ever used. I am now gaining strength and appetite, which was all gone, and I was in despair but I tried your Bitters. I am now well able to go about and do my own work. Before taking it I was completely prostrated.

MRS. MARY STUART.

BUT ONCE A YEAR.

BY T. MILLER.

Those Christmas bells so sweetly chime,
As on the day when first they rang
So merrily in the olden time,
And far and wide their music flung;
Shaking the tall gray-tried tower,
With all their deep melodious power;
They still proclaim to every ear,
"Old Christmas comes but once a year."

He merrily came in days of old,
When roads were few, and ways were foul;
Now staggered—now some ditty trolled,
Now drank deep from his wassail-bowl—
Half buried 'neath the mistletoe
His long beard hung with flakes of snow;
And still he ever caroled clear,
"Old Christmas comes but once a year."

But those old times are dead and gone,
And those who hailed them passed away,
Yet still their fingers many a one,
To welcome in old Christmas day.
The poor will many a care forget
And sorrow think not of his debt,
Then let us sing amid good cheer,
"Old Christmas still comes once a year."

CURIOUS BLUNDERS.

BLUNDER commands many an army, and invariably leads his soldiers into the ditch, or to defeat.

Blucher's blunder lost Napoleon Waterloo, and the blunders of the feather-bed generals of the late war would make a volume. A blunder lost the gallant Colonel Baker, of Oregon, his life, at Ball's Bluff.

The annexation of Texas was hastened by a blunder of a Texas citizen in shooting the trespassing pigs of a French ambassador. Louis Phillippe thereupon threatened war, and thus prevented the Lone Star sovereignty from floating their European loan, and thus pigs and blunder hastened the admission of the State.

The siege of Balaklava was a huge blunder, and Tennyson, the poet laureate, has immortalized it in his lines:

Forward, the Light Brigade!
Was there a man dismayed?
No, tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blundered.
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die;
Into the valley of death
Rode the Six Hundred.

Dr. Johnson—severe critic as he was—wrote, "that every monumental inscription should be in Latin; for that being a dead language, it will always live." Another Johnson blunder is:

"Nor yet perceived the vital spirit fled,
But still fought on, nor knew that he was dead!"

How could a warrior keep on fighting after he was dead?

Thackeray, the novelist, in "Virginians," makes Madame Esmond, of Castlewood, in Westmoreland county, a neighbor of Washington, at Mount Vernon, on the Potomac, fifty miles distant, and a regular attendant at public worship at Williamsburg, half way between the York and James Rivers, fully 125 miles from Mount Vernon, and so immensely affected are the colored hearers of a young preacher at Williamsburg "that there was such a negro chorus about the house as might be heard across the Potomac," the nearest bank of which is 57 miles away.

He makes General Braddock ride out of Williamsburg, a place he never was at, in his own coach, a ponderous, emblazoned vehicle, with Dr. Franklin, the little postmaster of Philadelphia (Franklin's average was 160 pounds), over a muddy road in March, through a half-wilderness country of more than one hundred miles, to drive with Madame Esmond, in Westmoreland county.

Shakspeare blundered, too. He speaks of King Lear, an early Anglo-Saxon king, not wanting spectacles, which were not known until the fourteenth century. When he speaks of Macbeth's death, in 1054, and King John's in 1200, he talks about cannon. They were not used until 1346. In his "Julius Cæsar" he makes the clock strike three. There were no clocks in Cæsar's time.

Schiller, the German dramatist and poet, speaks of a lightning-conductor 150 years before it was invented.

Wolfe, in his famous lines on the burial of Sir John Moore, who fell at Corunna in 1809, represents it as occurring at night. Rev. Mr. Seymour, the clergyman on the occasion, says the burial took place in broad daylight.

The High College of Physicians made the mistake of refusing a diploma to Oliver Goldsmith, for which the world thanks their erudite asininity, for instead of a big-wigged quack they have the "Vicar of Wakefield," and "Deserted Village."

They blundered when they refused Sir James Simpson the post of Highland parish doctor, but he smothered his mortification and discovered for suffering humanity that luller to sleep and enemy of pain—chloroform.

Conversational blunders are frequently ludicrous. They are often the children of bald-headed ignorance, and the result of persons trying to pass for what they are not.

To a lady wearing a cameo breastpin with a cut of the Roman Goddess of Agriculture, a gentleman said:

"That must be Ceres."

She replied:

"I don't see anything serious about it; it's only a woman's head."

A man wrote from London to his correspondent in Bombay:

"Send me two monkeys."

But he spelt the two too, and forgot to cross the t, so that the order read 100 monkeys.

By the next vessel 80 monkeys came, and the correspondent wrote:

"I have done the best I could; raked the country from Bombay to Seringapatam, but 80 was all I could get; will send the other 20 next trip."

Some people like to butcher the King's English, especially uneducated people suddenly raised to wealth.

Blunders are serious sometimes, as that of the man who, to burn the wasps' nest, set fire to his barn.

A woman at Meridan, Miss., caught a rat in a trap, and, not knowing how to get rid of it, decided to bake it. So she got a shovelful of coals and tucked them round it in the trap. This she did in the house, and while it was simmering along, she went to gossip with a neighbor. In due course of time the trap took fire. The good lady returned, but not being able to extinguish it, the house and two adjoining buildings were burned. Loss, $30,000. Next time she traps a rat she will drown it.

Grains of Gold.

It is the struggle against difficulty that brings faculties into play.

Disputes should be so conducted as always to secure a peaceful ending.

A great many people in this world praise goodness, and then do as they have a mind to.

No matter how unworthy a man may be, he should have our sympathy if he is suffering.

Adversity, how blunt are all the arrows of thy quiver in comparison with those of guilt.

It is a higher exhibition of Christian manliness to be able to bear trouble than to get rid of it.

Do all that you can stand, and then fear lest you may fall, and by the grace of God you are safe.

There cannot be a greater rudeness than to interrupt another in the current of his discourse.

Everybody seems to consider himself a kind of moral half-bushel to measure the world's frailties in.

A bitter word may make a wound that will never heal. A kind word may win a friend that will never turn.

There is no trait more valuable than a determination to persevere when the right thing is to be accomplished.

Every life is walled with the gates of progress, and to a man a token hang their iron-strings of opportunity.

Some men have a Sunday soul which they screw on in due time, and take off again every Monday morning.

If you wish to ensure your future success, your days must be spent in industry, your evenings in steady ways.

Firmness of purpose is one of the most necessary sinews of character, and one of the best instruments of success.

If we wish to be best judges of all things, let us first persuade ourselves of this—that there is not one of us without fault.

When a misfortune happens to a friend, look forward and endeavor to prevent the same thing from happening to yourself.

They who scatter with one hand, gather with two, not always in coin, but in kind. Nothing multiplies so much as kindness.

When you trip up, do not waste time in the investigation of the stone that tripped you; speed on with your vision quickened for the new obstacle to be encountered.

The thing to do with a nettle is to admire its beauty, touch its softness, delight in its fragrance, and avoid its needles of pain. So of all the nettled events of life.

If the same kind and delicate consideration were habitually bestowed on the inmates of our homes that we accord to strangers, harmony and peace would abide with us, and the home would be a paradise.

Femininities.

Five bridesmaids are now the proper thing.

Jockey hats are not as popular as was anticipated.

The net to catch a man matrimonially—The brunette.

The newest fine cloth jackets are lined with bright striped satin surah.

Mrs. Shoddy says she has just bought a new African for her baby.

The Austrian ladies have taken to learning the art of fencing as an amusement.

Persons who remain single from choice, do so often from the choice of the other sex.

"How Can a Woman Tell?" is the title of a recent poem. How can she help telling? would be more appropriate.

A pet dog, attired in a Piccadilly collar and white satin necktie, gave eclat to a recent wedding at Mauch Chunk.

Sealing-wax, having the initial of the writer's name marked in the centre, is now used in fashionable correspondence.

Six ladies have graduated with honor in England at the London College of Chemistry, and mean to begin life as druggists.

General Sherman cannot restrain his boisterous merriment over the Nashville man who had to pay $800 for kissing a school-teacher.

The exuberance of youth may betray good girls into little indiscretions; but not into vulgarity, which is only one step from vice.

A San Francisco woman who didn't dare blow up her husband any other way, bought him a celluloid collar, and got him to sit by the fire till it exploded.

A matrimonial agency director in Paris says that the inquiry of his younger female clients is, "Who is he?" The older ones eagerly ask, "Where is he?"

Little George was questioned the other day about his big sister's beau. "How old is he?" "I don't know." "Well, is he young?" "Yes, for he has no hair on his head."

Although Rev. E. S. Bowdish, of St. Paul, has been divorced from his wife, he is still jealous of her. He forged an order on the postmaster for her mail, and is now in jail.

"Don't you think that this half-mask is very becoming to me?" inquired a lady of a rival at a recent masquerade party. "Well, yes—it hides at least a portion of your face."

A Massachusetts widow dresses in mourning and wears bangs made of her departed husband's hair. She prudently had saved for that purpose all that she had pulled out before his death.

A Lynn clergyman tells young men to choose their associates from a class higher than their own. The better advice would be to so conduct themselves that there should be no class higher than their own.

"Where our storms come from," read Mr. Broughton, in a scientific paper. "Well, I know where a great many of them come from," he mentally ejaculated, looking up and glancing at his wife.

No trait of character is more valuable in a wife than the possession of a sweet temper. Home can never be made happy without it. It is like the flowers that spring up in our pathway relieving and cheering us.

"When I marry," said a budding schoolgirl, "I'll want a tall, fine-looking man." "There's where you're wrong, sis," said her more practical mother. "You'll have less trouble watching an ugly man, and enjoy more of his company."

How many suffer by unrequited affection! They are attached strongly to those who return them cold words, indifferent looks, and even avoid their presence. A word that might not otherwise be noticed, often sinks deeply in the heart of one whose life is bound up in another.

Law Yep, a wealthy Chinaman of Portland, Oregon, recently married a bride sent him from China by a nephew, whom he sent to negotiate the little affair, the choice being made by means of a portrait. The wedding festivities, including fireworks, lasted several days, and cost, it is said, about $2,000.

An Ohio youth named Weyant, who has been the accepted lover of Miss Snapp, the reigning belle of New Paris since 1875, and who has finally been jilted after having had his wedding-day postponed three times, has sued the girl's father for $12,000, the value of his bruised affections, blasted hopes and wasted time.

Two men abducted a servant girl the other night from the house of a wealthy citizen of Belpre, Ohio, in mistake for his daughter. They didn't discover that they had the wrong girl until they had driven outside the city limits with her. It is believed that their object was to demand a ransom had they secured the other girl.

A short time since two young ladies were accosted by a gipsy woman, who told them that for a quarter each she would show them their husbands' faces in a pail of water; which being brought, they exclaimed: "We only see our own faces!" "Well," said the old woman, "those faces will be your husbands' when you are married."

An ingenious method of arriving at an estimate of the numbers of children who succeeded in evading the compulsory bye-laws of the School Board has been adopted by the Ragged School Union of Liverpool. A band of music was hired to play two hours a day during school hours in different parts of the city, and a record was kept of all the youths who were attracted by the music.

Advice to young ladies: You want to know how to tell whether or not he is spoony on you? Ask him to button your glove. If he does it readily, you may as well look elsewhere, but if he goes to work with "fingers and thumb," and tug and strain, if he tear out a button-hole or two—especially if he scratch your wrist once or twice, then you may be sure you've got him, and may pull him at your leisure.

News Notes.

The Empress of Russia is consumptive.

Cocoanut culture is being tried in Florida.

General Sherman is said to detest street-car riding.

The next Mississippi Legislature will contain 14 negroes.

"Lady Suffrage" is what they call it in Washington Territory.

Talmage's church has 2,909 members, or 414 more than Beecher's.

The opera season of four weeks cost New York upward of $750,000.

A New York florist claims to sell over 10,000 rosebuds every day.

The "Daisy Missionary Society" is a Columbus, O., organization.

There are 60,000 insane people in France, according to a recent census.

Iron masts are now being put into large ships in place of wooden ones.

Chicago newsboys have a debating society in connection with their home.

Florida bobs up serenely with the announcement of ripe strawberries.

There have been 109 murders in Leadville, Col., since its incorporation.

A hog-weed 30 feet in height was recently found growing in Athens, Ga.

The only colored member of Congress this year is O'Hara, of North Carolina.

The refining of wines by electricity is an experiment that is being tried in Los Angelos.

Flour to the value of $295,000,000 is annually consumed in Great Britain and Ireland.

Chinese try to smuggle opium into San Francisco by putting it in the soles of their shoes.

A Swedish education of any pretension includes a knowledge of how to read and speak English.

Corn suppers, at which every viand served is made of the cereal, are all the rage in St. Louis.

A conductor on the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad is estimated to be worth $50,000.

Advertising pays. The fortune of Holloway, the London pill-maker, is estimated at $25,000,000.

A velocipede for use on the ice, and fitted with steel skate-like runners, has been brought out in Canada.

Prohibition is gaining ground even in Texas. Two counties have just voted against licensing saloons.

A correspondent of one of the Chicago papers says that Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt gives away $250,000 a year.

A Southern Superior Court Judge recently ruled that crunching peanuts in court was liable as contempt.

Congressman Woodward, a new member from Wisconsin, once served as a page in the house to which he now belongs.

A pair of mountain sheep's horns was found imbedded in a tree sixteen feet above the roots, recently, near Austin, Nev.

The cheap temperance eating-houses are reported to have vastly improved the character of the restaurants in St. Paul, Minn.

A breastpin containing an Edison glow light, and fed by a small vest-pocket battery, is sold for $9 at Nuremberg, Germany.

A young lady belonging to a Lafayette, Ind., family recently eloped with a young negro with whom she had become infatuated.

Statistics make it appear that there are about, all told, nearly 50,000 sailing vessels, of which over a third carry the English flag.

The Birmingham, Ala., schools observe the birthdays of the leading American poets by readings and recitations from their works.

An analysis of matrimonial advertisements in Germany show that three times as many women as men seek partners in that manner.

A young child was taken to church in Quebec, Canada, and baptized; and when the parents returned home the child was found dead in its wraps.

Dan Johnson, colored, of Sherman, Tex., has recovered $500 damages from the Texas and Pacific Railroad for refusing his wife admission to the ladies' car.

Unclaimed deposits to the amount of [illegible],000,000 have been reported by eight of Connecticut's savings banks, of which there are yet 45 to be heard from.

The storm in London on the 12th of December was so furious that during the night many people got up and dressed, believing that the city was not secure.

Paris papers state that a man named Colas, who had the monopoly of rat-killing in that city, has just died. He used to feed exclusively on the produce of his "sport."

IT IS WITH PLEASURE THAT I ADD MY TESTIMONY to the excellence of Dr. Jayne's Expectorant. I have used it in my family for several years, and can truly say that I know of no medicine equal to it for checking and curing the frequent Coughs and Colds to which children are subject at all seasons of the year. I have also realized great benefit from it myself, and have recommended it to others, who almost invariably have learned to value it. I always prescribed it to the students under our care when necessary, and the teachers willingly add their testimony to mine in praise of this medicine.—J. S. Edwards, Principal of Providence Conference Seminary, East Greenwood, R. I.

The Broken Dragon.

BY JOHN J. M'COY.

EDITH RAY stood, with clasped hands, and cheeks that were alternately pale and scarlet, before the shattered fragments of one of those outlandish China ornaments, which seemed to be valued in an inverse ratio, according to their beauty.

It had been fashioned after the semblance of a dragon, high-shouldered, hideous, and tinted a pale, muddy green—but Mrs. Templeton regarded it with an admiration that argued a positive affection.

It had belonged to her great-grandmother and was reverently handed down from generation to generation in the Templeton family—and now Edith Ray, her niece and reigning favorite, had, by an unlucky stroke of the handle of her dusting brush, knocked it down and broken it.

Mrs. Templeton was upstairs.

By great good luck she chanced to have a headache on that particular day, and had not left her bed, so that, for the present at least, the horrible tidings might be kept back from her.

"Oh, what shall I do?" cried Edith, wringing her hands.

And then she chanced to remember that Cousin Betsy Briggs, a sour-tempered maiden lady who had quarrelled with most of her relatives in general, and with Mrs. Templeton in particular, had the mate of this piece of preposterous china ugliness.

"If I could only get Cousin Betsy's dragon, thought she, "and have it safe in the parlor before aunt gets over her sick headache."

And Edith made an errand to Miss Betsy Briggs' old-fashioned house almost immediately.

She did not care to broach her subject at once, but approached it delicately and by degrees, mentioning as it were, incidentally that a friend of hers was most anxious to possess a China ornament of that style and description.

"And you think I'd be tempted to sell mine?" remarked Miss Briggs, viciously. "I wouldn't, then! Money couldn't buy it of me. Not that I care much for such heathen trash, but Hester Templeton would crow over me too much. My dragon is a dead match for hers any day in the week."

Edith made no rejoinder.

She was sick at heart.

But just then Annie Milton came in, a fresh, blue-eyed blonde, who received from Miss Briggs the astounding salary of ten pounds a year, for being reader, bird-feeder and general drudge.

"Oh, Edith!" cried Annie, "don't you want to go up in the garret and see my nest of young mocking birds? They are too cunning for anything."

"Yes, I'll go," said, Edith, spiritlessly. "As well there as anywhere," she thought.

So Miss Betsy went back to her novel, and Edith followed Annie's light footsteps up to the great roomy garret which served as the general catch all and *repertoire* of all the disused furniture, old-fashioned finery, and forgotten odds-and-ends of the establishment.

The first thing she saw, as she came up the narrow stairway was the veritable China dragon, dim with dust, and festooned with cobwebs, upon a remote shelf under the eaves.

"Oh! yes, they're very nice, I dare say," said Edith, absently. "But I never did care much for such things, you know."

And just as Annie was stooping to pick up a dropped scarf, Edith caught the China monstrosity from its bracket, and hid it under her shawl.

It never occurred to her mind that it was stealing.

"Cousin Betsy will never miss it," said she to herself. "She seldom goes up in the garret, and I'll keep it in our parlor until Aunt Templeton goes to S——, and then she can suppose the cats broke it during her absence. And, after all, it will only be borrowing Cousin Betsy's China dragon for a little while. She'll get it safe again."

And when Mrs. Templeton recovered from her illness and came downstairs again she never dreamed of the accident that had happened to the piece of rare old china.

"It does seem as if my China dragon had faded a little in its colors of late," said she; and Edith's heart stood still in her bosom.

But no other remark was made, and the poor girl's panic passed away.

Just two weeks after that a telegram summoned Edith back to her native plains, to attend the deathbed of a beloved sister, whose will left her tolerably independent as regarded this world's goods; and at the end of three months of absence she returned to bid Mrs. Templeton good-bye.

"For I can afford to live as I please now," said she, "and I need be no one's drudge and companion."

Mrs. Templeton received her graciously enough.

She had always liked Edith after her brusque uncertain fashion, and was rather sorry than otherwise to part with her.

But almost the first thing that Edith saw when she crossed the threshold of the well-remembered room, was the China dragon, perched grimly on its accustomed bracket.

She gave an unconscious start.

Improbable as it may appear, she had entirely forgotten, amidst all the more absorbing incidents of her recent life, the episode of the China dragon.

"Ah!" chuckled Mrs. Templeton, as her keen glance followed the direction of Edith's eye, "I warrant you've seen no such china as that since you've been away. Have you heard what happened to Betsy Briggs' poor piece of imitation, which never could pretend to compare with mine?"

"Happened!"

"Yes, happened. It's a word out of the English dictionary, ain't it?"

"What was it?" faintly questioned poor Edith.

"Lost—stolen—she thinks, and disposed of on the sly to some curiosity dealer, by that companion of hers, Annie Milton."

"Oh, aunt!"

"I think myself its highly probable," said Mrs Templeton, nodding her head. "This is such a world of iniquity, you know; but at all events she's dismissed the girl, and very lucky she may think herself that she wasn't sent off in charge of a policeman. Of course it was impossible for her to get another situation, and they do say she's going off in a decline."

Edith started up, with throbbing heart, and cheeks dyed a vivid scarlet.

"Where does she live? What is her address? I must go to her at once."

"Go to her?" almost screeched Mrs. Templeton. "And what for?"

"I must see her! Please don't ask me why, just yet."

"Perhaps Cousin Betsy may know," responded Mrs. Templeton, indifferently. "I've nothing to do with it one way or the other."

Cousin Betsy was absent, but her housekeeper, Mrs. Manuplies, happened to know whither Annie Milton had gone, in her trial and trouble.

"It's but a poor place," she said, "but what's a body to do, without either friends or money? And all this fuss about a miserable piece of china, uglier than sin, and not even good to put a drawing of tea into."

* * * * * * *

"Is she very sick? Oh, doctor, tell me, is she dying?"

Dr. Seymour shook his head.

"A doctor is not so much wiser than the rest of the world, Miss Ray," said he. "And a person has but little change or inducement to live in such a place as this."

"But if I were to take her home with me? I could give her every attention and luxury. Oh, Doctor, you don't know how terribly responsible I feel for her. If it had not been for me——"

And here her voice choked her.

They moved Annie Milton, even in the flush and delirium of fever, away from the close, hot room, where workmen's tools clicked incessantly overhead, and children swarmed around like unhealthy fungi of the human kind, into a cool, fresh little house, fronting a park, which Miss Ray rented, ready furnished; and Edith watched over the sick girl with more than a sister's care.

And the very first day that she could leave her charge, she went to Mrs. Templeton and Miss Briggs, and confessed all.

"I was poor," said she. "I dreaded dismissal. I thought the ornament never would be missed out of Cousin Betsy's garret, and—and—oh, what a terrible chain of consequences my unthinking hand has set in motion."

Mrs. Templeton shook her head.

"Deceit is never prudent," said she. "I valued the dragon, but it would be dear, bought at the price you've paid for it, Edith. Take Betsy's piece of china back again. I won't have it in the house."

"I rather think you won't," sharply retorted Miss Betsy. "Talk about your dragon being better than mine, indeed, when you believed mine to be yours all these months. Oh, yes, I'll take it back fast enough."

And Miss Betsy chuckled audibly at the victory she had gained over her rival in the art of collecting antiquities.

And in their enthusiasm over china, these two ladies forgot all about such a trifle as a human life.

But Annie Milton got well.

Had she perished, Edith Ray would have felt herself almost a murderess for ever.

She recovered, and dwells to this day with Edith as a beloved sister and friend.

And the bitter experience of the China dragon wrought a rich harvest of good in Edith Ray's heart.

THE CHINAMAN AND HIS COFFIN.—The idea of the Chinaman is that when he dies he ought to be buried in the trunk of a tree, and so it comes about that all coffins are designed with a view to keep up the illusion. They consist of four outside tree boards, and are so fashioned together as to look very like a tree at a little distance. They are, of course, tremendously heavy; but then that is considered an excellent fault. If a son wishes to be very polite to his father, or one friend desires to obtain the good will of another, he makes him a present of a good, solid, heavy coffin. The gift is put into an honored place in the house ready for use, and is shown for the admiration of any friends who may call. The owner would rather go into his coffin than part with it, and generally speaking, though a Chinaman may get into debt and be very harshly treated by his creditors, they will leave him his coffin, not wishing to prejudice his entry into the next world, which according to the Celestials, depends very much upon the way in which a man is buried. I was told that half the Chinese living in Hong Kong were already in happy possession of their coffins, and ready to enter then when wanted.

THE world-wide reputation of Ayer's Hair Vigor is due to its healthy action on the hair and scalp, through which it restores gray hair to its original color and imparts a gloss and freshness which makes it so much desired by all classes and conditions of people.

Love and Despair.

BY PERCY HERBERT.

HERBERT WAYNE walked up and down the floor of the little chamber, where he had spent most of his time for the last two weeks.

It seemed but yesterday that he was thrown from his horse, picked up in a senseless condition, and brought to this house.

"Why did that accident overtake me? Why was I ever brought here? And yet I am not sorry.

"How bright the world seems since I entered this little chamber.

"Oh, how I love her. Turn which way I may, her innocent blue eyes are looking into mine.

"I will leave here to-day. I cannot remain longer without telling her of my great love for her; and honor forbids that while I am bound to another.

"And I think the dear child returns my love. Yes, I know she loves me; and I am positive I love her.

"I cannot live without her, and Helen must release me.

"But I needn't say must, for faithful, noble Helen would not take my hand if she thought my heart was not with it."

And a look of pain settled on Herbert Wayne's handsome, clear-cut features, as the image of Helen Weston, that was to have been his bride in a few short months, rose before him.

"Poor Helen! What a scoundrel she will think me.

"She loves me with all the strength of her pure, loving nature, and I thought I returned her love, but I never know what real love was until I saw that blue-eyed, golden-haired angel that has nursed me so tenderly for the last two weeks.

"Ah!" and Herbert stopped before the window, as he caught sight of a petite figure in fresh muslin and blue ribbons, with a coquettish little hat adorning her wealth of golden hair.

It was Daisy Imray, the girl he loved so desperately, going off, apparently for a morning stroll, with that stalwart young fellow whom Herbert was so jealous of the evening before.

"The country coxcomb!" hissed Herbert.

How greatly delighted Daisy would feel if she could only hear Herbert express himself thus.

Infatuated Herbert Wayne thought her an angel, but at heart she was a coquette of the vainest type.

"I must speak to her before I go," said Herbert. "But no, I cannot. Helen must give me back my freedom first, and I can return and ask Daisy to be mine."

Herbert left the farmhouse on the roadside where he had spent these two delicious weeks.

Left it, thinking of nothing but his own happiness—never thinking of the misery worse than death he was about to inflict on the faithful, loving heart that anxiously waited his coming.

Three weeks after, Herbert walked up the path to the farmhouse.

"Oh, Mr. Wayne," cried Daisy Imray, clapping her hand, in childish delight, as she ran to meet him, "who told you about it?"

Herbert Wayne took no notice of the question.

Oh, how he longed to clasp her to his throbbing heart, and tell her what he had come to tell; and, taking her hand in his, he said:

"Then you are glad to see me again, Daisy?"

"Oh, yes, indeed, Mr. Wayne. I hope you'll enjoy yourself. But who told you about it?"

"What do you mean—who told me about what?"

And Herbert smiled down at the joyous face.

"Why, who told you that—"

The eyelids drooped, and the color came and went in a manner that delighted Herbert.

"Why, what is it, Daisy?"

"This is my wedding day."

"Your wedding day?" said Herbert, the color leaving his cheek.

"Yes," said Daisy; "did you come to see me married?"

"Come to see you married!" and Herbert dropped the little hand as if it was a coal of fire.

She—whom he loved so well—was to be married that day.

Herbert understood it at last. All his sweet hopes were turned to gall.

Henceforth "love would be of his life a part."

"Why had fate served him such a turn?" he asked himself.

A little voice within struggled to be heard, to tell him that it was not fate, but his treatment of Helen Weston.

He smothered the voice of conscience, but he could not shut out from his mind's eye a darkened room, a figure prone upon the floor, a face white and rigid, and two dark, truthful eyes filled with agony and despair.

Ah, Herbert, had you been a Christian man instead of a fatalist, what misery would have been spared, not only to yourself, but to that other faithful, loving heart.

WE are astonished at the endeavors of parties to introduce new remedies for coughs and other kindred complaints when they should know that the people will have Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup, and nothing else.

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SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.
The Great Blood Purifier.
FOR THE CURE OF CHRONIC DISEASE.
SCROFULOUS OR SYPHILITIC, HEREDITARY OR CONTAGIOUS.

Chronic Rheumatism, Scrofula, Glandular Swelling, Hacking Dry Cough, Cancerous Affections, Syphilitic Complaints, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, Water Brash, White Swelling, Tumors, Hip Diseases, Mercurial Diseases, Female Complaints, Goat Dropsy, Bronchitis, Consumption.

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SKIN DISEASES,

ERUPTIONS ON THE FACE AND BODY. PIMPLES, BLOTCHES, SALT RHEUM, OLD SORES, ULCERS, **Dr. Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent** excels all remedial agents. It purifies the blood, restoring health and vigor; clear skin and beautiful complexion secured to all.

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Not only does the Sarsaparillian Resolvent excel all remedial agents in the cure of Chronic Scrofulous, Constitutional and Skin Diseases, but it is the only positive cure for

Kidney and Bladder Complaints

Urinary and Womb Diseases, Gravel, Diabetes, Dropsy, Stoppage of Water, Incontinence of Urine, Bright's Disease, Albuminuria, and in all cases where there are brick-dust deposits, or the water is thick, cloudy or mixed with substances like the white of an egg, or threads like white silk, or there is a morbid, dark, bilious appearance and white bone-dust deposits, and where there is a pricking, burning sensation when passing water, and pain in the small of the back and along the loins.

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One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, while others require five or six times as much. **One Dollar Per Bottle.**

R. R. R.
RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.
The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.

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MALARIA
IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS.

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There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious, Scarlet, Typhoid, Yellow and other fevers, (aided by RADWAY'S PILLS) so quick as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

Looseness, Diarrhœa, or painful discharges from the bowels are stopped in fifteen or twenty minutes by taking Radway's Ready Relief. No congestion of inflammation, no weakness or lassitude, will follow the use of the R. R. Relief.

ACHES AND PAINS.

For headache, whether sick or nervous, toothache, neuralgia, nervousness and sleeplessness, rheumatism, lumbago, pains and weakness in the back, spine, or kidneys; pains around the liver, pleurisy, swelling of the joints, pains in the bowels, heartburn and pains of all kinds, Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure. Price, 50 cents.

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.
Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.

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Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse, and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

Observe the following symptoms resulting from Diseases of the Digestive Organs: Constipation, Inward Piles, Fulness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fulness or Weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering at the Heart, Choking or Suffocating Sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the Head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Chest, Limbs, and Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

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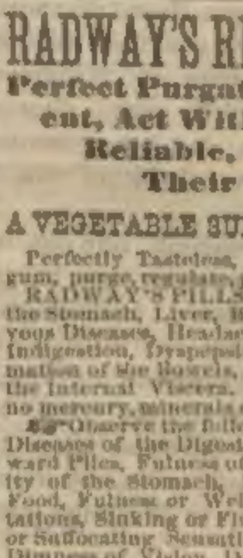
Be sure and ask for Radway's, and see that the name "Radway" is on what you buy.



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A Corder, Binder, Tucker, Ruffler, Five Hemmers, Braider, Thread Cutter, Needle. Oil and full outfit with each. Guaranteed to be perfect. Warranted 5 years. Don't pay double for machines no better, when you can try these before you pay a cent. All late improvements. Runs light with little noise. Handsome and durable. Circulars with hundreds of testimonials free.
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A ROMANCE IN SKELETON.

A calm, delightful winter night—
A moon's mysterious golden light—
A maiden at her window height,
In robes of pure and fleecy white.

The little wicked-gate ajar—
A lover tripping from afar,
With tune, voice and light guitar,
To woo his radiant guiding-star.

A lute with soft, insidious twang,
Oh, how the doting lover sang!
A bull-dog with remorseless fang—
A nip, a grip, a deathly pang.

A maiden faint'ng with affright—
A lover in a sickening plight—
A bull-dog chuckling with delight—
A wild delirious winter night!

—U. N. Nosz.

Humorous.

A "fair" shot—A Miss.

Hair'em-scare'em—Bangs.

Financiering vowels—I O U.

Wholly uncalled for—A dead letter.

Volunteer circles—Rings on the target.

Odd Fellows—Bachelors and widowers.

The multiplication table—The registry of births.

An honest man is the noblest pursuit of a woman.

A work of fiction—The weather prophet's almanac.

The poorest of all relations—Telling a good story badly.

Man proposes, and the girl weighs his pocket-book and decides.

Why is a new baby like new flannel? Because both shrink from washing.

Many a young man's success in life depends on his selection of a father.

A question of etiquette—Is a man considered polite when he "bows to a decision?"

A Boston paper states that a South End man calls his wife Crystal, because she is always on the watch.

A hairdresser has this startling announcement in his shop-window: "Ladies' short comings made and arranged."

"How do you know when a cyclone is coming?" asked a stranger of a Western man. "Oh, we get wind of them," was the reply.

A swimming-school in Frankfort-on-the-Main announces in German-English, "Swimming instructions given by a teacher of both sexes."

A Connecticut man claims to have a cat that eats cucumbers. This is something that ought to be encouraged in the cat family as much as possible.

When Clara was asked what she should do if a nice young man should ask her hand in marriage. She naively replied, "I don't think I'd no."

A coon club in New Hampshire, after having been organized ten years, has captured its first coon. The coon is supposed to have been ill at the time.

If the anatomy of some people were constructed upon the proportion of what they say to what they do, there wouldn't be anything of them but mouth.

A Toronto man waited until he was eighty-three years old before he got married. He waited until he was sure if he didn't like it he would not live long to repent.

The following question is suggested for a debating society: "Which was first—the egg which produced the first chicken, or the chicken which produced the first egg?"

Just because the widow's mite was so highly praised, there are lots of people who pride themselves with never putting more than a penny into the contribution-box.

"Yes," said the Idaho man, "it's dreadful unfortunate that my gal got hugged by that ar' b'ar. Do you know she's sorter held me in contempt since that occurrence."

German Professor—"What a couple of bonnie little children, dear Baroness! Twins, I suppose?" Baroness—"You have guessed rightly." Professor—"Are they both yours?"

A Detroit man on a visit to St. Louis lost $10,000 in cash, and rewarded the finder with a 25-cent piece. In justice to Detroit, it should be stated that the man really thought it was a quarter.

Faith is sometimes personated as a drenched female clinging to a sea-washed rock; but a better personification would be a bald-headed man buying a bottle of patent hair-restorer.

"Her father is a pirate?" "Aw, ya'as." "Why, what are you talking about? Old Pinfeather is no pirate." "Why—aw—ya-as. He's a regular freebooter. That's the reason I quit going to her house."

A youngster who had had several teeth extracted, was comforted by the dentist with the assurance that they would come again. With an eye to the immediate future, little Johnny inquired: "Will they come again before dinner?"

Out West they have so many hangings, that the editors are driven to distraction to invent new head-lines to put over the accounts of them, and the result of the editor's desperation is: "Died from the Effects of Tight Lacing."

A man 75 years old used Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator for enlargement of the Heart. It cured him. Price $1.

A man always finds out when there is a hole in the bottom of his stocking. He makes the discovery when he takes off his boots at night and puts his feet down on the hot register to warm. He rarely forgets to speak right out about it.

Why should a tailor make an unbiased politician? Because he goes in for both men and measures.

"Will you take a drop?" said the Sheriff to the prisoner, as he adjusted the noose, placing the knot behind the left ear. "I'll be hanged if I do," was the response.

The New Jersey man got his foot caught in a railroad frog, and shaved off part of his heel with his jackknife, was somewhat put out to learn that the next train did not pass for eight hours.

A German professor has figured it out that man came from the bear, and while we can scarcely bear to think of such a thing, it may be so, for surely men and women love to hug as bears do.

All forms of Heart Disease have been cured by Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator. Price, $1.; 6 for $5.

It is a singular and unfortunate thing that these people "who didn't know that the gun was loaded," never shoot themselves. They're always sure to kill somebody who is of some use in the world.

Consumption Cured.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure for Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. Noyes, *149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.*

Superfluous Hair.

Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, 198 West Springfield Street, Boston, Mass.

☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

An Old Soldier's
EXPERIENCE.

"Calvert, Texas,
May 3, 1882.

"I wish to express my appreciation of the valuable qualities of

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral

as a cough remedy.

"While with Churchill's army, just before the battle of Vicksburg, I contracted a severe cold, which terminated in a dangerous cough. I found no relief till on our march we came to a country store, where, on asking for some remedy, I was urged to try Ayer's Cherry Pectoral.

"I did so, and was rapidly cured. Since then I have kept the Pectoral constantly by me, for family use, and I have found it to be an invaluable remedy for throat and lung diseases. J. W. Whitley."

Thousands of testimonials certify to the prompt cure of all bronchial and lung affections, by the use of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. Being very palatable, the youngest children take it readily.

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Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

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CURES
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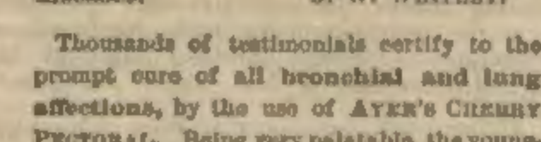

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50 New Enameled Chromo Cards for 1884, name on, 10c. Prize with 2 pks. Potter & Co, Montowese, Ct

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music and words, to any address. Among them we may mention the following:

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Tripping o'er the hills.
Rich and Rare were the Gems she Wore.
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O Fred, tell them to Stop!
One Bumper at Parting.
Little Golden Sunbeam.
Kathleen Mavourneen.
Twickenham Ferry.
The Blue Alsatian Mountains.
Killarney.
All on account of Eliza.
The Torpedo and the Whale!
The Man with the Sealskin Pants.
The Old Folks are gone.
Is Jennie True To Me?
Put Away That Straw.
With the Angels By and Bye.
Oh, Lucinda.
Scenes of Childhood.
Grandmother's Chair.
Oh, Mary Ann, I'll Tell Your Ma!
My Heart's with my Norah.
Lardy Dah!
The Colored Hop.
Don't Shut out the Sunlight, Mother.
The Sweet Flowers I've Brought to You.
Meet me To-night.
Angel Faces o'er the River.
Yes, I'll Love You When You're Old.
Te'l de Children Good-bye.
Hardly Ever.
Etc., Etc., Etc.

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Address 720 Sansom Street,
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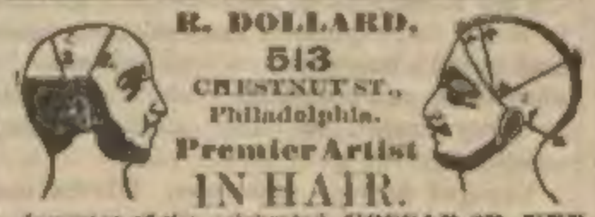

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Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
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He has always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Fringes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Private rooms for Dyeing Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair.

ALWAYS ASK FOR

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40 (1884) Chromo Cards, no 2 alike, with name **10c.** 13 pks. $1. GEO. I. REED & CO., Nassau, N.Y.

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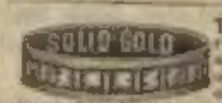

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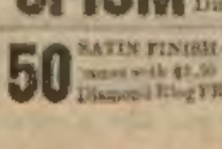
60 Lovely Cards Choice Chromos, your name in pretty type, post-paid 10c. 25 fine gold-edge cards 10c. Hidden name cards 12 for 25c. 500 other styles. Big pay to agents. Send 6c. for terms and samples to canvass with. Holly Card Works, Meriden, Conn.

80 CARDS BEST QUALITY. New designs in Satin and Gold Finish, with name, 10 cts. We offer $100 for a pack of cards any nicer work, or prettier styles. Samples free. Eagle Card Works, New Haven, Ct.

$1000 Every 100 Days. Positively sure to Agents everywhere selling our New SILVER BOUND WHITE WIRE CLOTHES-LINE. Warranted. Pleases at sight. Cheap. Sells readily at every house. Agents clearing $10 per day. Farmers make $500 to $1000 during Winter. Handsome samples free. Address, GIRARD WIRE MILLS, Philadelphia, Pa.

40 Satin Finish, Extra die, Golden Beauties, Friendship Gems, Script Motto & Bird Cards, with name, 10c., 12 pks. & this heavy rolled gold mat ring for $1. Agt's complete Album 25c. Please remember this is not the cheap pack and ring so much advertised. ALLING BROS., Northford, Ct

Bevel Edge Cards, designs for 1884. Send 10c. for 50 Chromo Cards with name, Latest yet. Agents say: "Your cards sell best." Large sample Book and full outfit 10c. Quickest returns. Give us a trial order. **Clinton & Co.** North Haven, Ct.



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50 Elegant Imp. Chromo Cards, name in new script type only 10c. 13 pks $1, or 10 pks for $1 and choice free of handsome gold ring, plain, chased, fancy, stone setting, or tortoise 2-blade knife. Snow & Co, Meriden Ct

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CRAZY PATCHWORK Send to the Yale Silk Works, New Haven, Ct. for a dollar package of their beautiful silks for patchwork.

OPIUM Morphine Habit Cured in 10 to 20 days. No pay till Cured. DR. J. STEPHENS, Lebanon, Ohio.

50 SATIN FINISH CHROMOS with name 10c. Send 20 names with $1.50 and you will receive a Beautiful Parisian Diamond Ring FREE. STAR CARD CO., Clintonville, Ct.

Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

FASHION is so far from being progressive in style that, on the contrary, suggestions and ideas are more and more taken from bygone times, and the search after novel styles has already carried us as far back as the fifteenth century; two of the most attractive and popular modes of to-day were equally fashionable in the days of Louis XI., viz., the hat commonly worn by gentlemen at that time with a straight brim in front, but turned up flat at the back, and the sleeve with a large puff at the shoulder and clinging tightly to the arm below it.

The original shape of the Louis XI. hat has been very little altered, and it is now very much worn.

It is generally trimmed with feathers, but some modistes have adopted the historic ornament of a fine gold chain from which are suspended sequins, in place of the little images formerly worn.

The Louis XI. hat is very pretty in chenille; the round crown is covered by a ribbed network of chenille sustained by wire bent into the right shape.

It is exceedingly light and very becoming, as are chenille chapeaux generally.

A novelty for skirts is the indeplissable pleating which is likely to supersede flat pleating, being far more graceful than the ordinary flat pleating.

The fine pleats are folded like a fan, a gathering thread is run through the top, but beyond this they require neither taping nor stitching to keep them in their place.

The pleating is generally about a yard deep and flows backwards and forwards with every movement, giving most charming effects of color, and light and shade, and always falling softly into the straight line again.

A very pretty dress made in this style is of blue cashmere.

Above the pleated skirt is a small draped tunic, and the pointed corsage is slightly open front and back, with twisted roulettes of white crepe lisse beneath the edge.

Young ladies with slender figures show a strong prediction for the Garde Francaise coat, in plain, ribbed, or broche velvet, and in cloth; it is a stylish little vetement worn over a waistcoat in a lighter color, with the corners turned back in a coquettish fashion and lined with satin.

The most elegant are made of white cloth braided and embroidered with gold, and worn over waistcoats of blue brocaded velvet or satin, the corners of the coat tails turned back and lined to correspond with the waistcoat.

This convenient corsage is adopted for theatre or dinner wear, with a half-worn skirt from a summer toilette.

The large white cravat with flounces of Mechlin or Alencon, and sleeve ruffles to match, invariably accompany the corsage and give it the requisite finish.

The Henri II. doublet is another favorite style in broche velvet or in broche ottoman; this is a tight-fitting corsage covering the hips and ornamented with coquilles of Spanish lace in the same color as the velvet or with wide beaded passementerie. The sleeves are in puffs divided by bands of beaded passementerie.

The long Directoire redingote in black or colored ottoman, lined with bright colored plush, open at the back and closing in front with large Robespierre revers, also lined with plush, is a very stylish and becoming vetement for tall women no longer in their first youth.

But the long Polonaise, with beaded brandenburgs, and a deep border, collar and cuffs of sealskin, blue fox or sable, is the ne plus ultra of elegance in feminine attire for driving and visiting.

Sealskin polisses are no doubt very stylish, but for the time being they are eclipsed by the superior charms of the fur trimmed Polonaise.

Many warm vetements are prepared in anticipation of a severe winter, such as jackets and mantlets of cloth trimmed with sable, blue fox, beaver, musk rat, and black or grey astrakan. Ermine and chinchilla are used only with velvet mantlets and costumes, and grey squirrel will be much employed for ornamenting children's velvet costumes.

Large and small fur pelerines are accepted as fashionable vetements, especially when worn with polonaises or redingotes of cloth, plain velvet, or brocaded velvet.

For morning wear there are tailor-made jackets and redingotes of plain cloth, with the collar and paroments of velvet, but otherwise distinguished by the complete absence of ornaments, or a very spare use of the quietest modes of trimming.

Many polonaises are made to fasten at the side with a military plastron ornamented with brandenburgs.

The variety of costumes and mantles is so great, however, that it is impossible to describe all, but they are adapted for all styles of figures, and nothing is needed but taste to guide the choice.

The mode of employing fur so extensively a trimming has naturally led to its adoption for other purposes, and chapeaux and chaussures follow the ruling fashion.

There are numbers of sealskin, fur, and feather toques to be seen, and some hats are a combination of velvet sealskin.

Chaussures for the winter are lined with colored plush matching the toilette and bordered with fur; walking boots of cloth or velvet are fur bordered, and the coziest of bedroom slippers are of embroidered velvet, lined with ermine, or of quilted satin, matching the morning dress, also lined with fur.

A pretty costume is of silver grey sicilienne and satin duchesse.

The skirt is of satin with three pleated flounces, and the tunic of sicilienne with a small panel on the left for ming the tablier, and a long panel on the right.

The corsage is a silk jersey, with gray chenille fringe round the edge and a jabot of chenille in front.

The silver grey felt hat is trimmed with grey velvet and a long feather.

Two other toilettes are worth mentioning; one is a walking dress of nutbrown satin merveilleux and Hindoo voile: the tunic is of this last material with a short draped tablier and panels caught up a la payasanne; the pleated skirt is of satin. The corsage is of voile with a waistcoat of white faille trimmed with three rows of very fine silver braid ending in a point.

The other dress is an evening toilette of rose-colored satin and embossed ottoman velvet.

The front of the skirt is of satin entirely covered with fringe and bead embroidery on pink net.

The corsage is also covered with similar embroidered flowers on a pink ottoman ground.

The coiffure is a plume of pink feathers and diamond comb.

Rich velvet brocades are made with plain petticoat edged with a bourrelet of plain velvet: the corsage is sharply pointed, and worn over a train sash which is gracefully draped just enough to produce deep folds.

Satin broche and plain satin are also made up in this style.

A very pretty copy of this mode is made in the new woolen broches which are made in two shades.

For example, a dark grey rosebud is on a lighter grey ground.

The front of the skirt is of the rosebud broche, and is edged with alternate pleatings of plain and broche woolen tissues, and the back of the skirt is of plain woolen very prettily draped, but covering the entire back; the bodice, of plain woolen, buttons over a waistcoat of rosebud broche, and the sleeves are trimmed to correspond.

Very thick woolen materials are gaining in favor, and especially those soft vigognes and camel's hair tissues which appear to be very thick and coarse, and which are quite as easily draped as the finer looking makes.

Vigogne foulee, cashmere, Hindoo and fancy cashmeres, surges, fine cloth and crepe de laine in black and colors, and woolen cords are much used, as the endless variety of so-called cheviots and tweeds.

These thick materials are used for morning toilettes only, and are succeeded by costumes of mingled fabrics such as velveteen and cashmere.

Fancy broche cashmere and velvet or satin, chenille and velvet spots on black and colored cashmere grounds are enjoying popular favor.

Stamped and rather brocaded velvets of light colors, as well as white, cream, and rose color, are employed for sorties de bal, capes, bodices for evening dress worn with voile skirts of the same shade of color, and are also used for children's costumes and mantles.

Fireside Chat.

LITTLE TRIFLES.

PRESENTS for gentlemen are a difficult of suggestion; and every year as Christmas comes round this puzzle obtrudes itself on the notice of our lady readers, and is no easier of solution.

"Why not make a smoking cap?" says one.

"Exactly! most appropriate! But where is the man who has not already more than one of those useless articles, and does one man in a hundred ever wear one when he smokes?

"And, after all, a smoking cap as a present can hardly be said to be a novel idea." "Then make a pair of slippers," says another would-be helper out of the perplexing dilemma.

"No! woolwork slippers are so excruciatingly ugly." Granted, but we are going to suggest a mode of ornamenting a pair of slippers that shall be the reverse of "excruciatingly ugly."

They shall not only be charmingly pretty, but, above all, shall possess the advantage of being somewhat out of the common, to say the least, amongst the larger number of our readers; so that their fortunate possessor shall be one of the envied of mortals in the estimation of his male friends.

On a dark bottlegreen velvet, almost black in tone, paint with lustra colors a design of oak leaves and acorns. The golden and brown shades make a pleasing bit of autumnal coloring that is bright without being showy.

Another pair could be made of dark claret or chocolate-colored velvet, the ornament being an arabesque pattern wrought out in gold and brown.

Then there are blotters that make a writing-table look more tasty than those of plain leather.

One we have seen done with a design of chrysanthemums, and in one corner a butterfly, might well please the most fastidious gentleman who delights in having fancy things about him.

Decorative effect is the main point to be considered when all is said for such an article.

There are note-books, too, and cigar-cases that can easily be made into things of beauty by the aid of these colors, in the hands of ladies who can draw and use a brush skilfully.

It is done in the following way: The design being drawn on paper, the outlines are pricked through at short intervals. It is then laid on the velvet in exact position and pounced with white chalk. The sketch is now removed, and the faintly indicated outlines are gone over with Chinese white. The pattern is thus clearly defined and perfect, so that it is no trouble to fill in, and the consideration as to whether the drawing is true or no need not take off the thoughts that should be given alone to the coloring.

In large pieces the design is generally outlined with gold silk before the painting is commenced; the work is richer when so treated, but it is entirely a matter of choice. There are fourteen colors; they are mixed with medium, and applied with sable and hog's-hair brushes.

Lustra painting does splendidly for the fashionable three-fold screens. It is quickly accomplished, and so extremely effective that it seems peculiarly adapted for decorative work.

A screen that took our fancy bore three separate designs, one on each panel. The first was the horse chestnut, the second pomegranates, the third grapes. On another some sober-looking owls perched on branches of trees; another showed the sacred bean and a few lines suggested water.

An oval mirror with bevelled edge was framed in velvet, ornamented with the same kind of painting.

The passion flower lends itself well to all decorations that need a trailing design; it is suitable for narrow upright panels. The single dahlia will be approved by many. It is supposed now, we believe, to take the place of the once worshipped sunflower.

The velvet can be purchased with the painting ready commenced, and thus ladies may save themselves the labor of designing and tracing.

The lustra colors can be used on satin, Roman sheeting, linen, wool, and terra-cotta.

Linen d'oyleys look well with a small spray of flowers, and are lasting; for, unlike other kinds of painting, it will bear washing; the strip of velvet or plush for the dinner table should be ornamented with the same.

Ivorine cards painted with lustra colors are most beautiful, and are comparatively novel.

Those that please us best have humming birds and brilliant-plumaged creatures of the feathered tribes perched on delicate sprays of foliage; the metallic lustre of the colors renders the prismatic hues of the feathers admirably.

These cards are mounted on fine Bristol board after being painted, as without a white opaque mount the paintings do not show up.

Painting on wood is a favorite pastime with some ladies, and articles that would at one time have been considered suitable alone for the barn or dairy are now brought into requisition to serve as work receptacles in dainty drawing-rooms. Thus, milk pails and milking cuppices are both decorated with the brush by amateurs. The inside of the pail is lined with some bright colored satin, and on the outside the painting is executed.

First of all cover with oak stain the whole of the pail, then with oil colors paint sprays of blossom, hawthorn, or almond blossom boldly on it. When that is finished and dry, line the interior, and loop some thick cord through the square handles on either side, bring it across the top so as to form a loose handle: finish the same with knotted ends or tassels.

Correspondence.

O. I.—It was received all right.

H. H.—Wait until she answers your letter.

MAUDE.—We advise you to return the ring.

F. W. E.—We could not make it convenient to republish the serial you speak of.

LAWRENCE.—Probably she never received the package. Make inquiries in reference to it.

MAT.—The idea is a first-class one. We advise you to follow it up, and, without doubt, you will succeed.

SCRIBBLER.—Quills were used for pens about the year 600. Steel pens came into use about 1820, and have practically driven the quills out of the field.

SEMPER.—Your blood seems to be out of order. You must consult some skilful medical man, and do not conceal anything from him, as you say you have done in the past. Tell him everything.

QUEENIE.—You ask: "Do you know of anything that will turn the color of auburn hair to brown?" No, we do not, and if we did we would not tell you. Isn't auburn hair just as good as brown? Never desert your colors.

SMITTEN.—As the young ladies may have something to say about their matrimonial destiny, notwithstanding the young man's determination to marry one of them, perhaps it would be well for him to consult them on the subject.

GRAMMARIAN.—You are correct. A common fault in modern speech and writing is the introduction of the word "ever" where it is entirely useless. For instance, in the phrase "as soon as ever I saw him," the italicized word is a mere surplusage, and adds nothing to the strength, meaning, or elegance of the passage.

D. D.—Of course, not knowing either the young lady or you, we cannot say whether she is a flirt or not, but the mere fact that she is negligent in her correspondence with a friend whom she is glad to welcome back is no proof against her. Unless she is very silly, her profession of finding you "the sweetest thing on earth," is a little suspicious.

ACHINO.—Perhaps if you should state the case to your father, he would be able to help you. It may be that your old lover hesitates to speak to you about the past, for fear that you no longer care for him and resent his treatment of you. Your father could properly lead up to the subject, in conversation with him, and ascertain what his feelings are. That having been done, you would then know what course to pursue.

MARCUS.—We are reluctantly compelled to say that it would be better to avoid such an alliance. There would certainly be a strong inheritance of disease in the family; and it is not right to entail misery on mankind. We do not feel bound to speak sarcastic regard in cases of great clearness and high probability; but this unfortunately seems to be a case in which there can be no doubt of the unwisdom of the union proposed.

ARTIBAN.—A good legal authority says, speaking of wills:—"There is nothing one can do in reference to which it is more certain that he needs legal advice, and that of a trustworthy kind. Eminent lawyers, not practiced in this peculiar branch of the law, have often failed in making their own wills." So the greatest favor you can do your friend is to have his will drawn by a good lawyer; although, of course, a will written by anyone and properly witnessed is valid.

B. B. M.—According to the law of England, first cousins can legally marry. The Queen was married to her first cousin. The Catholic Church, however, forbids such marriages. It might be mentioned further that experience has shown that such marriages are not conducive to healthy progeny. The children of families who have frequently intermarried, often turn out to be imbeciles. 2. You should wear mourning for twelve months, unless some change in your circumstance, occurred in the meantime, which would render your doing so highly inconvenient.

BLACK.—People seldom agree as to what kind of eyes are the handsomest. Some prefer one color, and some another. Some of the poets go into rapture over dark eyes—

"Those dark eyes—so dark and so deep!
Bright—and as black and burning as a coal."

Others are equally enthusiastic over blue eyes. Heine says:—

"I everywhere am thinking
Of the blue eyes's sweet smile;
A sea of blue thoughts is spreading
Over my heart the while."

AMBITION.—The reading of good books of best authors, is the truest and simplest guide to correct speech and accuracy of thought in writing. We advise you to read and study, for your ideas are good, and you think rightly, which is the important point. You have struck most important questions when you say that "all classes should be taught how powerful is every one, rich or poor, for good or evil;" also, "that the prosperity of our country depends on its social as well as political unity"—not, of course, uniformity. It is true that we are beginning, even in this republic, to talk about "upper and lower classes," and it is sadly true, also, that with the increase in wealth, they are drifting more and more widely apart from each other.

EMMA.—A gentleman is very foolish to be offended "unintentionally," and the best way is to let him severely alone, however hard it may be to do so, nevertheless i do not be afraid to express regret in a dignified, self-respecting way, if the opportunity should occur, but it is not necessary to make one. Certainly a lady should thank a gentleman for his kindness if he has taken trouble for her, but she is not to ask him in if she does not wish to do so, or if it is late and an unsuitable hour: no gentleman would expect it. With her thanks, she may express her regret that it is too late to invite him, or that she has special duties waiting to claim her attention at that hour. There is never any occasion to offend by stating the truth. Write a pretty note, saying that while you cannot receive your friend in the capacity of a lover, you do not wish to lose your friend, and if he is sensible, he will resign his pretensions for the present, and remain the friend he was before. A few years from now you may give a different answer.